

OPENNESS

The Phenomenon of World-openness and God-openness

by

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Introduction

1.1. Introduction to the Problem

The present essay is a phenomenological analysis of a fundamental human characteristic. The phenomenon, which serves as the focus of our investigation, is man's openness and what is, in the final analysis, man's God-directedness. There have been many philosophers who dealt with this phenomenon in the history of philosophy after Max Scheler who was the first to introduce the term "world-openness" (*Weltoffenheit*). We are tempted to identify the somewhat wider concept of man's openness with world-openness. At least what Scheler's concept of man's world-openness seems more or less to cover what we generally mean by the phenomenon of man's openness. In this sense, by saying that man is open to the world (*weltoffen*), we do not imply merely one single form or interpretation of man's openness (that is, we don't single out one specific object such as the 'world' and describe man's openness toward it), but we refer to the whole of the phenomenon of man's (general) openness. In my view and understanding of the term, man's openness to the world and his God-openness are not two separate phenomena. I shall argue in this essay that God-directedness (God-openness) is the ultimate and full understanding of world-openness. World-openness is a many-faceted term: it entails a structural metaphysical essential trait of man as a finite person, which has no proper opposite except the absence of it in animals and in other non-personal beings; it has a contradictory opposite but lacks any contrary opposite. Every human person is characterized by this structural world-openness regardless of his acts and attitudes. In other words, world-openness in this sense constitutes man's ontological structure. World-openness can also mean, however, something else that indeed requires human intellectual and volitional or affective conscious acts and culminates in the *attitude of world-openness*, an attitude which is free and which not every human person possesses actually and which is opposed to many forms of

closedness. With this in mind, we will analyze different acts, attitudes, etc., in which man can be open or closed.

My analysis aims at being a classical analysis in the sense that the character of its argumentation is of a classical phenomenological nature. By this I mean the method of the early phenomenological movement (Munich-Göttingen-circle or *Münchener Phänomenologie*) and its later development. One of its main characteristics is that which Max Scheler emphasized in his seminal essay “*Phenomenology and the Theory of Cognition*” as “radical empiricism”. By the term radical empiricism he understands an immediate contact with different phenomena as they are given to us, and their detailed analysis, that is, a radical differentiation of one phenomenon from the other. The main difference between the phenomenological empiricism and the so-called classical empiricism is that, for classical empiricism, experience means sense experience and modes of consciousness that result from the stimulation of the five senses. As a final result of this, classical empiricisms generally end up in materialism or sensualism. For Scheler and for the majority of the thinkers of the early phenomenological movement “lived experience” (taken again in a fundamentally empirical sense) is exceptionally important. As Scheler says:

A philosophy based on phenomenology must be characterized first of all by the most intensively vital and most immediate contact with the world itself, that is, with those things in the world with which it is concerned, and with these things as they are immediately given in experience, that is in the act of experience and are “in themselves there” only in this act.¹

From this it follows, that this essay is empiricist in the sense that it goes through and lists different aspects and appearances of the phenomenon of the openness of man. On the other hand, however, the most important issue of this thesis involves the application of whatever method in obtaining knowledge of essence(s) of the phenomenon of world-openness. The first method of the thesis is like the “empiricist” method of a classical religious scholar, who

¹ Max Scheler, “Phenomenology and the Theory of Cognition” in: Max Scheler, *Selected Philosophical Essays*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973: 138.

exploring the notion of “holy place”, goes through all occurrences and typical features of holy places in the world from Japan to Patagonia – geographically as well as theoretically. This method must not be misunderstood as a mere empirical surveying of facts and conceptions of things, nor as an empiricist inductive method in the normal sense of the term. Rather, such as survey and multitude of examples should help us to reach an experience of the intelligible authentic essence of a “holy place.” Only after having gained access to the intelligible nature of the specific form of “sacredness” that can be attributed to a place is one able to tell what the phenomenon of “holy place” is in itself; what its characteristics look like; in what sense different types of “holy” places differ from each other and from less holy places, unholy, or desacralized places.

In short, this essay intends to be traditional-phenomenological in the sense that it takes every intelligible form of openness into consideration from openness as the curiosity of a tourist to openness as God-openness. After completing this project are we able to enlighten what openness is in itself and to conclude that there are significant, less important and false understandings of man’s openness and many levels and kinds of this phenomenon. Nevertheless, the ultimate understanding of man’s openness reveals itself only after such fundamental and all-surveying analyses. There are in fact countless understandings and forms of man’s openness. The reason why we have to go through all these forms is that even false forms of openness can teach us something about the real form and ultimate understanding of man’s openness. Returning to our previous example, investigating a 21st century profane place, which, as a matter of fact, bears only few external resemblances to holy places such as a traditional church but still is intended to serve the same end of a sanctuary, may at least aesthetically speaking be whole profane. We must distinguish here two quite distinct phenomena: the objective holiness of a place that for example the empty tomb of Christ possesses in the light of the faith even if a horrendously profane thing such as a train station

were built around it, and a holiness of place which depends on aesthetic moments and on the atmosphere of the place. In the face of a modern Church that looks like a dentist office we may at least be led to the conclusion that this is precisely a place, which has nothing to do with holiness, that is, that this is not how a holy place looks like, even if in the light of the Catholic faith the holy mass being celebrated there makes it objectively a holy place. Its aesthetic profanity cannot cancel its objective holiness but creates a deep contradiction between the appearance and the reality of the place. It cannot be an adequate embodiment of a holy place even if sometimes the fact that not only a holy religious event took place there (which makes it a holy place in spite of the profanity of its looks), but that also a sacred image is present there that shapes this place, may to some extent reestablish the holiness of the place even in an incarnate human and aesthetic way. Thus even if the rolling floor and electric transportation of visitors or our Lady of Guadalupe stand in stark contrast to the atmosphere a holy place ought to radiate, the deeply inspiring image gives it an experienced sacred atmosphere.

This observation is not a useless intellectual survey of one insignificant appearance of the phenomenon of a sacred place, but its “incarnate” “visible” or audible sacredness plays a minor, but decisive tune in the whole “symphony” of the phenomenon itself. With the help of such – apparently pointless – survey (or sequence of surveys) we are closer to the thing that we want to identify philosophically.

Our thesis aims to be a classical phenomenological analysis also in the sense that it seeks to engage in pure thinking about things themselves. Now, turning to pure thinking requires the change of our spiritual attitude and the consciousness of this change. It requires readiness, continuous attention to concentration in that new attitude. This change of attitude does not consist primarily in the serious concentration on the objects of our thinking and acts, but in the return to the question of how we act and think, and how the object in question is

given to us as lived experience. Turning to lived experience means to break with all prescientific, everyday understandings of the phenomenon. In other words, this essay is phenomenological in the sense that it requires a radical restart from the writer as well as from the reader: not keeping distance, but reflecting in certain inwardness on his own experiences and their intelligible objects in order to be able to deepen his self-awakening, which, however, will help us “to fix our minds on the authentic essence of thing[s]”.²

This thesis includes three parts. In the first part, I shall offer a short introduction to the problem of the phenomenology of world-openness. I will argue that it is basically anthropology that we wish to do here: its main focus is human existence or, more precisely, an essential characteristic of the human person. In the second part, I shall try to shed light on the phenomenon of openness. In the third part, I shall make clear the proper object of man’s openness differentiating between different possible objects.

² For the many possible forms of gaining knowledge of essences and philosophical methods see Josef Seifert, *Discours des Méthodes. The Methods of Philosophy and Realist Phenomenology*. Frankfurt / Paris / Ebikon / Lancaster / New Brunswick: Ontos-Verlag, 2009.

1.2. The Notion of Openness in Anthropologies of the 20th Century

“The epoch of humanity is that when men rarefy.”
(Ernst Jünger: Tagseite Nachtseite)

Because of falsely grounded metaphysical views of man, the past century can be considered rather as the epoch of “inhuman” anthropologies.³ Sartre, referring to Marxism (although his remark can be applied without any restriction to National Socialist ideology and many other ideologies such as the neo-liberal ideology), says that: “Marxism will become an inhuman anthropology if it does not integrate man as its ground.”⁴ He goes on to say that: “The Marxism of today suffers in a deficiency [...] since it completely disregards the understanding of human reality.”⁵ According to the proponents of Marxist ideology, there is strict determinism in the world that leaves no room for chance and freedom. They say that man is only a finely composed machine. In this mechanistic materialist view, the role of the subject (and of subjectivity) is minimized and the concept of man is distorted. In this sense, the 20th century can be viewed from a philosophical point of view as the questioning of the integrity of man, subject and person. This is, I think, one of the origins of the widely accepted views of “death” and “crisis” and of theories of the “end” of art, of history, of the whole present order, of culture, mankind, the world, etc. (I do not wish to deny, however, that each of these theories of the “end” deserves a careful investigation nor do I overlook the fact that some of these theories have very reasonable roots that cannot be reduced to a distorted image of man, nor that a great risk of the destruction of the whole humanity through misused atomic power indeed exists. Nor can it be overlooked that the end of this world is also repeatedly prophesized by Christ and is thus the object of a religious belief.)

³ Sartre was the first who used this rather paradoxical expression, since classical anthropology is either “human” or not anthropology at all. Nevertheless “inhuman anthropology” expresses that there are anthropologies of the 20th century whose aim is to deprive anthropology from its “human” character. The question is whether we can call those views without any restriction philosophical or anthropological of any kind? On the other hand, I don’t use the term in its Heideggerian sense (*unmenschlich*; he published his famous article earlier than Sartre, in 1946.), which means “man’s being-out-of-his-essence”.

⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. Verso Press USA, 2004: 279. (First edition in 1960.)

⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, *op.cit.* 278.

There is, however, another view that arises in sharp contrast to the anti-anthropology of totalitarian ideologies. Within the intellectual decline “a certain discovery of subjectivity, or [...] turn to subjectivity, in modern philosophy” is detected.⁶ In a certain sense, turning to the subject in philosophy can be identified as a paradoxical consequence of inhuman anthropology. But this is not simply a counter-reaction. Rather, the situation of the philosophical world has also drastically changed in the last century. Turning to personal subjectivity, rather than a dethronement or displacement, has become a genuine philosophical act, whose value rests, however, on a sharp distinction between the subject understood as person, as a “subject of rational nature,” as a self-conscious and free being that exists no less really and objectively than the material cosmos, and subjectivity as that which only exists as object of conscious acts or as a judgment that does not correspond to objective reality but is only seeming true to a subject. While also these intentional objects solely constituted by a subject, such as the world of Don Quijote, also can bear high values and stand in intimate relation to reality, the claim that the latter sense of subjectivity, a world that does not exist in itself but solely is object of human subjectivity, is all we can reach is a relativism and subjectivism that must be considered to be a most fundamental error.

Although authentic personalism calls for the recognition of absolute personal being, doing philosophy as anthropology, however, presently is of the utmost importance, but not exclusively because of historical facts. Now, there are a number of philosophers who can be regarded as leading figures of the anthropological renaissance of the 20th century. Scheler, Heidegger, Wojtyla, Maréchal, Rahner, von Hildebrand, Pannenberg, Seifert and Crosby and many others considered in many respects man as the center of their philosophical interest, even though the majority of them do not consider man but God to be the supreme personal being. No doubt, there are significant differences between these thinkers; though I think that

⁶ John F. Crosby, The Philosophical Achievement of Dietrich von Hildebrand. Concluding Reflections on the Symposium. *Aletheia An International Yearbook of Philosophy* (5.) 1992: 321.

they share at least two common points: the general turning to the person and the investigation of the person through his acts. By turning to the person I mean that in the 20th century the human being came into prominence for many philosophies, which tried to understand the phenomenon of man non-reductionistically. By ‘investigating the person through his acts’, I mean an attempt for a new type of definition of man, which can rather be considered organic than static. When, for example, John F. Crosby characterizes Dietrich von Hildebrand’s philosophy, he refers to the same project (this however can be applied to all philosophers named above). Crosby says:

In the thought of von Hildebrand, too, there is a turn to personal subjectivity; he takes very seriously the characteristic acts of the person, such as knowing, responding, and most of all, loving, and tries to understand the nature of the person through his many analyses of the acting of the person.⁷

In this sense, we can say that Hildebrand’s philosophical turn to subjectivity is in fact a turning to the acts of the person. But this is only one point of view out of many. Now, I will not engage in an (anyway futile) effort to list here all definitions ever formulated in anthropology regarding man. One thing however clearly stands before us and will be in the center of our interest. I think basically there are two kinds of anthropology: anthropologies of closedness and anthropologies of openness. Anthropologies of closedness (*Endlichkeitsanthropologien*) deny man’s capacity to surpass every finite being (the capacity of man to transcend himself in forms of acts, or transcendence in respect of his absolute origin and ultimate aim) and reduce man to certain finite phenomenon (physical or psychological) of the world. Anthropologies of openness (*Offenheitsanthropologien*), in contrast, hold that man’s existence is fundamentally open to the world and to the whole of being. Anthropologists of openness investigating the basic structure of human nature discover that

⁷ Ibidem

“man is in search of infinity”,⁸ and, in the final analysis, understand the fact of the phenomenon of being open to the world (*Weltoffenheit*) in terms of God-directedness. Now, I claim that the above mentioned thinkers belong to this latter group. They differ, however, in the final interpretation of man’s openness. Martin Heidegger, for example, couldn’t accept explicitly that man is open to God, and some interpreters even attribute to his thought a structural and absolute atheism and anthropological relativism that sharply contrasts with the anthropology and metaphysics of the person implied by others.

Anthropologies of openness share a common, incomparably deep interest in the phenomenon of the human being and discover an unparalleled access to the treasury of the human world through his acts. The center of their interest is the peculiar, transcendent character of human acts. As von Hildebrand says “The specifically personal character of man as a subject manifests itself in his capacity to transcend himself.”⁹ Transcendence is the most fundamental characteristic, which I believe comprises all other characteristics. In my view, transcendence gives the possibility for man to go beyond or even against his very nature. Now, one can give various interpretations to the phenomenon of transcendence. Independently of the abundance of interpretations, however, it is remarkable that they all agree – implicitly or explicitly – that the most important attribute of man is his fundamental openness. I have to make clear that if I say man is transcendent, I do not mean that man can transcend God, for instance. To hold this would be simply absurd. In the case of human beings, by ‘transcendence’ I mean that man’s acts, attitudes, emotions, etc., have objects beyond themselves and beyond the person who is their human subject; cognitive acts cannot be reduced to a kind of immanent self-consciousness, and free acts and love cannot be reduced to a mere self-actualization that considers all things as means to one’s own happiness.

⁸ It is Scheler’s point. In addition to this, Scheler says that the sense of infinity is before every experience or assertion about the world and the self: “Hence, it is a complete mistake to assert that I exist (as in Descartes) or that there is a world (as in St. Thomas Aquinas) before asserting the general proposition that there is an absolute Being – in other words, to derive the sphere of absolute Being from the other modes of being.” Scheler 1979: 90.

⁹ Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Christian Ethics*. New York: David McKay Company, 1953: 218.

Moreover, many personal acts point to a higher reality, and at the same time show the contingent character of their human subject. I think we rightly apply the word “transcendence” to man if we do not mean by this that man is “over”/beyond history, social connections, connections with the factual world, etc. Nevertheless, the correct use of the word also requires that by this we do not mean that man is *only* historicity, sociality, factuality, etc.

The principal aim of this thesis is to analyze by the philosophical method of phenomenology the phenomenon of openness of man. This task at first sight seems to be simple, but after all comprises almost all the most important problems of philosophy, and as a result puts man into a new perspective. Since world-openness is present in many ways in man’s acts, behavior, attitudes, and constitutes his basic structure, it can easily pass unmarked. In spite of this, many philosophers have discovered it, but often failed to give a proper name and special emphasis to the significance of the phenomenon. They emphasized man’s transcendence concentrating mainly on the (transcendent) processes of the human acts. In my view, however, (world-)openness is the origin of man’s transcendence whatever form it has.

There has been a relatively small number of thinkers who dealt thematically with the phenomenon of openness, wherefore there is plenty of room for a new investigation into this phenomenon or the different phenomena that can be intended by this term. There are, namely, three main alternative modes of understanding openness. Here we cannot discuss in detail any of these forms – they will be discussed in later chapters. Instead, we will just give a short summary. The first understanding is close to the views of Arnold Gehlen. Gehlen consistently refers to the openness peculiar to man as world-openness. I think, however, that Gehlen’s term world-openness doesn’t add sufficient clarification to the concept of openness. For Gehlen world-openness is not a sub-division of the more general term of openness. Now, according to Gehlen’s understanding, world-openness is a learnt behavior. He says that man is

physically not as developed as animals are.¹⁰ To compensate for his “instinctual deficiencies”, man is compelled to draw on other faculties. For the evolutionary process that left him instinctually non-specific also imbued him with intelligence, self-consciousness, and an adaptable nature; this is what Gehlen called man’s world-open character. According to Gehlen, in order to overcome his deficiencies, man developed a so-called second nature (*zweite Natur*). For Gehlen culture is man’s second nature. In my view, Gehlen’s understanding of openness remains within the framework of biology and biologism. He rightly says that man’s responses to external stimuli are not automatically-instinctually programmed by earlier responses, but are based on deliberation and hence are open to change and reconsideration, that is, they are open to the world. Later, however, openness plays no role in the build-up of culture and man’s life. In other words, for Gehlen the notion of openness helped to outline man’s biological structure, but later he used it for nothing else. Gehlen’s view has two main consequences. Firstly, according to Gehlen, there is no single culture, only different cultures; man becomes an individuated expression of his native culture. As a consequence of this, Gehlen holds that there is no common human nature. Secondly, and this point follows from the first, in Gehlen’s anthropology there is no single definable reality. If we “remove” man’s “second nature”, the only (prime) nature remaining is again physiological-animal. The reason for this conclusion is found in Gehlen’s view on openness: for him openness is a learnt physical-biological behavior, and not innate, inalienably human.

A second main type of understanding of openness is that of Heidegger. Heidegger rightly characterized man as being-in-the-world, where the world means an ontological concept and not simply a temporal and spatial universe. According to Heidegger, the world belongs to man’s fundamental structure. Being-in-the-world therefore is in strong connection with historicity, body, time, etc. It is a great merit of Heidegger that he has articulated man’s

¹⁰ See Gehlen, Arnold, *Der Mensch Seine Natur und seine Stellung in der Welt*. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1966.

openness in the framework of such concepts as for example “average everydayness”. With concepts like this he was able to point out man’s inseparability from the world. Heidegger thought that our interaction with these everyday issues will make our own structure transparent and will point to our relation with being. For Heidegger, however, being-in-the-world is indeed transparent to being, but not to God. Heidegger rejected the idea of world-openness as God-openness. Man is open to language, history, future (in other words man is language-open, history-open and future-open) and to many other contingent issues of the world: Man can have authentic relation with all these things, this openness however does not overreach the horizon of finite being and can have no religious interpretation.

According to the third understanding, of which the early Max Scheler can be considered as the main representative, man is humbly open to being and man can know being as it reveals itself, but at the same time, man is also open to the highest reality, that is, to God.¹¹ His famous saying: “every finite spirit believes either in God or in idols”¹² can be applied here even if we have to take into consideration that there is a huge difference between the Scheler of the *On the Eternal in Man* and the Scheler of the *Man’s Place in Nature* who developed a spiritual, man-based idea of the divine.¹³ This man-based idea of the divine, however, does not concern the direction of man’s openness, even though it concerns the decisive issue of the nature and autonomous existence of the *object* of this *God-directness: God*. I do think that the spirit of the quotation is also valid for the later Scheler, however – as he says – the real object of man’s openness and direction is God, therefore whatever takes the place of God, one can reckon it – figuratively – as “idol”, that is, a divine-like, super-human entity. Here the point is not the object of man’s openness, but the reality of openness itself.

¹¹ Max Scheler’s understanding of world-openness will be discussed at length in chapter 2.2.

¹² Max Scheler, *On the Eternal in Man*. Hamden: Archon Books, 1972: 267.

¹³ The same conclusion was drawn by Dunlop however from an anthropological point of view. See: Francis N. Dunlop, “Scheler’s Idea of Man: Phenomenology versus Metaphysics in the Late Works.” *Aletheia* (vol. II.) 1981. pp. 220-235.

Scheler holds that the essence of man is his “exceptional place”, which is what we called above intelligence or the capacity of making decisions. Man's “exceptional place” is not the result of a quantitative “leap” from animality to humanity. In other words, there is not a quantitative difference between man and other organisms, but the deepest qualitative one. Again Scheler says: “Man is an X that can behave in a world-open manner to an unlimited extent. Becoming of man is rising by force of spirit towards opening to the world.”¹⁴ In Scheler’s account openness constitutes man’s ontological structure; it permeates the whole of human existence. One of the greatest merits of Scheler’s notion of openness is that starting from the phenomenon of man's openness he was able to develop a new, dynamic understanding of man, whose essence is grasped in his acts. The second merit of Scheler’s understanding of openness is that it opened up the possibility of a religious-theistic interpretation of it. By ‘religious-theistic interpretation’ I mean the widest meaning-providing understanding and the most comprehensive object of openness. When Scheler says that man is a being directed toward God, this axiom has to be taken as referring to an ontological status of the human person, which, however, does not necessarily mean its conscious, let alone its continuous realization through acts. Scheler’s understanding of man's openness to the world refers, on the one hand, to the multitude of possibilities of different actions, wills, believes, attitudes, decisions, on the other hand, it means an ontological arch-datum.

For Scheler the phenomenon of the ex-centric position of man has basically a religious aspect. Within this framework the phenomenon of world-openness receives its full meaning in a religious-theistic context. Scheler raised the question of the ultimate object of this phenomenon: what is the final object of man's openness? While stressing, however, the ex-centric positionality of man he already answered this question, because it also entails that man's original point of reference is not something worldly, but other-worldly. The following

¹⁴

Max Scheler, *Man’s Place in Nature*, New York: The Noonday Press, 1971: 49.

citation also proves that Scheler in all of the phases of his philosophy recognized an original openness to be a fundamental characteristic of man. Scheler says:

Precisely in the very moment when the world-open being and the never-ending striving had come into being in order to penetrate into the endless world-sphere and not to stop at particularities [...] in this very same moment man needed to anchor his center outside and over the world.¹⁵

My understanding of the phenomenon of openness is close to Scheler's idea, which provides a religious interpretation to man's openness. There are two points, which I can adopt from Scheler. Firstly, independently of how (or how not) one "fills out" the region(s) of openness no doubt that this attribute (openness) is an essential constituent of every human being. Secondly, there can be various objects of man's openness. Man can be open to the object-world, man can be open to the world of language, man can be open to culture and history, etc. According to Scheler the proper object of man's openness is God. This is basically also my thesis. Now, the question is, how can we arrive at this conclusion? It seems that it is the phenomenological analysis which can help us to give a satisfactory answer to this very important phenomenon.

In our case, the phenomenological analysis means trying to shed light on the nature of man's openness to God and to distinguish it clearly from bordering phenomena which might easily be confused with it. It is, however, not an easy and quick task to accomplish. There are numerous phenomena which are close to the phenomenon of openness and which also in themselves can hardly be grasped clearly. But before we would launch such an investigation, we have to address the significance of the anthropology and anthropological issues of today.

¹⁵ Max Scheler, *Man's Place in Nature*, New York: The Noonday Press, 1979: 108-109. This quotation also proves that in spite of any justified distinction between the "early" and the "later" Scheler, there is no complete difference between the "two Schelers" from the point of view of man's openness.

1.3. Taking philosophical Anthropology as a Key to Philosophy

“There are many tremendous things, nothing more tremendous than man.”
Sophocles: Antigone 332.

According to Max Scheler there are serious misconceptions and confusions in anthropology and concerning its main object, man. He distinguishes between particular scientific, philosophical and theological anthropology. He holds that there is no contact between the divergent views on man. He says:

In no other period of human knowledge man has ever become more problematic to himself than in our days. We have a scientific, a philosophical, and a theological anthropology that know nothing of each other. Therefore we no longer possess any clear consistent idea of man. The ever growing multiplicity of the particular sciences that are engaged in the study of man has much more confused and obscured than elucidated our concept of man.¹⁶

Nevertheless, within these three disciplines, Scheler attaches greatest importance to philosophy, and considers philosophy and philosophical reasoning as the only clue to solve the problems of humanity.

In my view it is not only due to historical facts, the rapid development of specialized sciences, the sub-human world wars, etc., that there has been a need to do anthropology seriously. If I might say so, it has never been only historical facts which direct the focus of philosophy to anthropological issues. First of all, there is a special intellectual need to do anthropology today. We hear it from all sides: man has lost his orientation. A well-based anthropology, however, can help humanity to find its way back to its proper “home” where justice and peace dwells. I believe that unequal societies are against human nature and race. It is, however, only a philosophically conceived anthropology that can articulate a well-founded answer to the challenges of the world today. On the other hand, however, the need of doing anthropology comes from the nature of philosophizing. For doing philosophy, especially from an anthropological point of view is something inherently human (that is human in an

¹⁶ Scheler, Max: *Man's Place in Nature*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1961: 128.

innermost manner); no other creature on earth can do that.¹⁷ Philosophy, whatever direction it takes, is a certain type of self-understanding. Since the object as well as the subject of this activity is human being, the philosopher does anthropology.

The task of an authentic philosophical anthropology is to give an account of the nature of man in the deepest sense. Philosophical anthropology as it is defined by Max Scheler is a comprehensive study. As he says, anthropology is:

a basic science which investigates the essence and essential constitution of man, his relationship to the realms of nature (organic, plant and animal life) as well as to the source of all things, man's metaphysical origin as well as his physical, psychic and spiritual origins in the world, the forces and powers which move man and which he moves, the fundamental trends and laws of his biological, psychic, cultural and social evolution, along with their essential capabilities and realities.¹⁸

The central thesis of this essay, however, seems to suggest that there is no authentic philosophical anthropology without continuous hints, crosstalk, overlapping domains, indications to a field that we usually call philosophy of religion. It seems that while we've been trying to concentrate exclusively on anthropological matters, i. e. on man, we did in fact philosophy of religion and metaphysics: we have been talking about God, the divine being, about man's God-orientedness. This observation, on the one hand, challenges the independence of philosophical anthropology, since it abolishes the border between the two sciences (namely philosophical anthropology and philosophy of religion), on the other hand however, clearly indicates the *raison d'être* of doing philosophy in classical terms and in the classical manner, that is, doing Philosophy organically. In order to defend this latter statement we have to accept that religion and philosophical understandings of issues of the religious are not only historical stages or forms of thinking as Hegel would say. Philosophical anthropology is a unique path towards the field of philosophy of religion. We know from

¹⁷ It might seemingly contradict that some Church fathers believed that Christ, because he is God's Word, is the archetype of all philosophers. Some also believed that angels can do philosophy. Now, philosophy as constitutively human means a unique positionality of man: man – as Plato says – can “take care of his soul” and “gods”.

¹⁸ Max Scheler, *Philosophical Perspectives*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1958: 65.

Plato and Aristotle that philosophy, and its point of origin: the philosophical investigation of man is a kind of “profane doctrine of salvation”; as they say: *therapeia toon theoon* [Plato]¹⁹ and *theologike episteme* [Aristotle]. In my view, if we want “to give an account of the nature of man in the deepest sense” then religious-theological statements of our anthropology are not illicit applications of an anthropological view to the domain of religion, but reflect the truth about man and give therefore adequate answers to the crisis of man, since, according to this anthropology, man gives an affirmative answer to the cognizability of reality when he responds to the whole of human reality which includes man’s ordination to God and God-openness. In a proper anthropological framework, truths of religion and the divine do not lose their meaning, but become more intelligible. If we say, for example, that man in acts of his heart is preordained to God (see chapter 2.3. the section on the heart), God will not lose His holiness, on the contrary: His holiness comes closer to us.

In this sense, a well-based anthropology seeks the ultimate reasons and necessary conditions of the cognition of certain objects in man as well as tries to understand the truth of man’s acts. In this sense, anthropology can be considered as foundation for any other philosophical discipline. On the one hand, one can consider every philosophical discipline as anthropology, on the other, – as a minimum program – one can consider anthropology as a real point of departure for every scientific attempt to define the human being.

In this essay I consider anthropology as a key to the whole of the constitution of philosophy. I’m going to do anthropology in this treatise, even though concentrating only on one special human characteristic. I hope, however, that by this “simple” and single-object-focused investigation the most important problems of philosophical anthropology and of philosophy as such will also be treated.

¹⁹ In the *Euthyphro* (12e-15b) Plato explains to Euthyphro what he means by *therapeia toon theoon* (the therapy of the gods).

1.4. Anthropologies of “Openness” (*Offenheitsanthropologien*) versus Anthropologies of “Closedness” (*Endlichkeitsanthropologien*)

The distinction that I introduce here considers anthropologies from the point of view of holding or refusing man’s original and inherent openness. I lay the emphasis on the adjectives “original” and “inherent” whereby I want to express that openness and its ultimate understanding, God-directedness, belongs necessarily to man. One could object that materialist views, such as the Soviet-type of anthropology, also hold man’s openness. To a certain extent it seems to be true; nevertheless I think that the notion of openness of the materialists is not openness in its original sense. I will argue in this chapter that anthropologies of openness realize and apprehend the phenomenon of man’s openness correctly in contrast with anthropologies of closedness.

Materialist philosophers argue that the human being can be open to many things, such as surroundings, the physical world, the biological world, objects, etc. The common attribute of these views is, however, the restriction of openness to one particular human behavior-type and the limitation of its possible objects. When Marxists say that man is open to the physical world, they restrict openness to one particular object (namely to physical objects) and exclude other possible, for example non-physical, directions and interpretations of openness. In this sense, we can say that this view – because it understands openness narrowly – denies man’s openness; it leaves out many or sometimes the whole of other objects. Consequently, this view on man cannot be considered anthropology of openness, but an anthropology of closedness, since it closes and restricts man to one single domain.

Views like this can also be considered an anthropology of closedness from the point of view of man’s real characteristics. A Freudian anthropology, for example, disregards the

majority of the qualities of human behavior, soul and intellect. Freud holds that man's first and most decisive characteristic is his sexual drive. According to Freud, man's everyday actions are determined by motives, which are mostly unconscious, that is, difficult to acknowledge and avow. For Freud, eros is not a yearning for a higher reality, but the hope of recapturing a sexual bliss and simple pleasure supposedly lost in infancy. He says that every human act is permeated by sexual instinct and human manifestations are nothing but different and transformed forms of sexuality. I think that this type of view on man disregards many real and valuable characteristics of the human being. It disregards the fact that not all of our instincts are determined by sexuality for instance. The instinct for nourishment, for example, is not only for sexuality or for race-preservation (and is not only transformed, "domesticated" or "sublimated" appearance of sexuality – as Freud would say –), but, especially in the case of humans, it can be simply for pleasure or for many other reasons. Even less can such a theory explain the search for truth, friendship, love, the giving of one's life for one's family or loved ones, etc. In short, a Freudian (or similar) view on man cannot give full explanation to the whole of the richness of the human phenomenon.

In contrast to reductionist anthropologies, anthropologies of openness open the whole of the totality for man. A physicalist view of man, which holds that to know a mental state and event is to know the information about the relevant nervous system, cannot exceed its limits determined by its physicalist way of seeing things. Anthropologies of openness, however, are not determined by physicalist, social or psychologic, etc., constraints in the explanation of the phenomenon of openness.

The third main characteristic of anthropologies of openness concerns their final interpretation. Anthropologies of closedness stick on a certain inferior level of interpretation. According to materialist accounts, since man is a physical-biological being (that is, exists without soul and spirit), his structure is of a physical nature; his feelings, psychical, non-

material manifestations are finely tuned physical-mathematical answers to different (physical) situations. Man is open only to physical reality. Anthropologies of openness, however, give a comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon of openness. Anthropologies of openness hold that man is not only a sexual animal (Freud) or a biological-physical being (Soviet Marxism), but possesses many other qualities beyond the above mentioned few. The main idea of anthropologies of openness is that man is not only a physical, biological or sexual being and, as a result, the understanding of man's openness is not restricted to the levels of the physical, biological and sexual. To understand man's openness as being open only to the biological world implies a false interpretation. Physicalist and biologist (and many other reductionist) views of man leave no chance to give a full and comprehensive account on man's openness. The main difference between anthropologies of openness and anthropologies of closedness is that anthropologies of openness aim at the most comprehensive interpretation. In the case of anthropologies of openness the most comprehensive interpretation is that it understands man in the framework of his being open to a God. Now, we have to answer the question of what we mean by man's openness as God-openness.

The Phenomenon of World-Openness

2.1. Preliminary Meaning of World-Openness

Preliminary Distinctions

In the first half of this chapter I shall investigate the problem of making elementary distinctions regarding phenomena in general terms, while in the second half of the chapter I shall concentrate on the elementary distinctions which mark the phenomenon of world-openness itself.

The main project of the thesis is to unfold philosophically one fundamental characteristic of the human being: his world-openness (*Weltoffenheit*). I consider it a multi-faceted phenomenon; it is therefore one of the main concerns of the thesis to distinguish between different phenomena that bear a certain resemblance to world-openness, such as being-in-the-world, “*Dasein*”, existence, instincts of animals, being open to the other, etc. World-openness is multi-faceted also in the sense that in the human being it has numerous manifestations and aspects, such as being open to the world through actions, being open to the world through acts of intellect, through the will, the heart, etc. From this point of view we will investigate also the openness of the intellect, the openness of the will, etc, in later chapters.

World-openness is, however, a particularly hard concept to grasp, since it is not a simple phenomenon, such as is, for example, the phenomenon of goodness or the different phenomena of values, such as the sacred.²⁰ Furthermore, it might be that our preliminary understanding of the phenomenon of world-openness rather distorts the real picture of it and results in a caricature. Now, caricatures certainly bear an undeniable resemblance to their models, but the distance or dissimilarity between them (models and caricatures) is often

²⁰ Or see Mariano Crespo’s subtle analysis on the phenomenon of forgiveness, where he, because of the clear and unambiguous nature of the datum of forgiveness, encountered less difficulties with proceeding within the frameworks of a phenomenological analysis. See Mariano Crespo: *Das Verzeihen. Eine philosophische Untersuchung*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter, 2002. (The topic of the easiness or hardness of a phenomenological analysis of different phenomena would require a separate thesis altogether.)

greater than the similarity. In order, therefore, to avoid misrepresenting the phenomenon in question we have to look – phenomenologically – into our preliminary understandings of it and just so long as we cannot confirm the opposite we have to presume that all our preliminary understandings may be potentially deceptive.

The preceding discussion may suggest that all our preliminary intuitions – by which I mean those intuitions that are naïve or so-called pre-philosophical – are misleading understandings. I do not, however, claim that the less rigorous and theoretical everyday thinking is valueless for a further rigorous conceptual analysis. Every philosophical inquiry sets out from a pre-philosophical, not reflected basis, and if we want to know what and how things really are, i.e., if we want to go back to the things themselves, then we have to assume an attitude, which is utterly “faithful” to the world. What we want to do here, therefore, is to take the reality of the peculiarities of the phenomenon as a starting point for its notional, theoretic explication. This method is the phenomenological method:²¹ as the reality (in our case the phenomenon of world-openness) manifests itself in a spontaneous manner, it shows from itself and by itself its content and relation to other similar notions. Or, as Martin Heidegger remarked, phenomenology is something (and whatever he may understand under this label he does not consider it a science), that allows the things to speak for themselves. For him phenomenology is “to let that which shows itself to be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself.”²² In its proper sense, however, the method, the way by which we approach and have access to the phenomena of the world, is method-less. As the immediacy of the self-manifestation of reality that is primordial and, in a final analysis, needs no other methods of any kind except faithfully intuiting and analyzing it.

²¹ Or it is at least a significant part of the phenomenological method, which comprises many methods. See: Josef Seifert, *Discours des Méthodes. The Methods of Philosophy and Realist Phenomenology*. Frankfurt / Paris / Ebikon / Lancaster / New Brunswick: Ontos-Verlag, 2009.

²² Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*. New York: Harper Row Publishers, 1962: 38.

Following the pathway of phenomenology, it seems to be reasonable, at first, to delimit that which world-openness is not. I think that this delimitation is a genuine method of phenomenologically going back to the things themselves. Instead of stating immediately – and in a certain sense prematurely – what world-openness or any kind of phenomenon is, I would like to suggest taking another way, a way from behind, which approaches its subject matter from the other way around, and in this sense from a broader perspective. The method that I am suggesting here is similar to the work of a surgeon: I cut down what does not belong to the thing itself, and I fix and fasten what belongs together.

The previous train of thought, although it may sound interesting and promising, might hide the frequent error of phenomenologists. From the very beginning phenomenology has been often charged with overlooking the phenomenon itself and concentrating exclusively on what the phenomenon is not.²³ This was taken by the majority of philosophers as a sign that the original claim of phenomenology had been abandoned. Manfred Frings relates the view of Wundt charging the Husserlian method, on the one hand, with only telling us what things are not, and on the other hand with the redundant use of tautologies which neither analyze positively or explain what a thing is:

Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920), renowned German philosopher of his time and contemporary of Husserl, once remarked that Husserl's 1900/01 *Logische Untersuchungen* only tell us what phenomena are not, never what they are. Indeed, Wundt's critique foreshadowed immense criticism of phenomenology during this century: it does nothing more, says Wundt, than tell us tautologies, such as »a judgment is a judgment«...²⁴

The same thing might be said about Max Scheler, who also devoted so much of his energies in his profound descriptions to what phenomena are not, rather than what they really are. The reason of this, I think, is twofold. First of all, phenomenological descriptions concentrating on

²³ See Spiegelberg's book where he lists all those who criticised phenomenologists overlooking what the phenomenon is. Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement, A Historical Introduction*. The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1982.

²⁴ Manfred S. Frings, *The Mind of Max Scheler: the first comprehensive guide based on the complete works*. Chicago: Marquette University Press, 2001: 122.

one phenomenon have the intention of making man “see” for himself what a phenomenon, in terms of its constitutive properties and the state of affairs rooted in them, actually happens to be. The phenomenological description can only *point to* the essence of the thing, because, on the one hand, it is not a definition by *genus proximum* and *differentia specifica*, and on the other hand, bringing a thing into view relies on the insufficient means of language and concepts. Among others it was Adolf Reinach who clearly pointed out the intuitive character of cognition in phenomenology. He says:

I have already indicated that essence analysis is no ultimate goal, but rather is a means. Of essences laws hold true, and these laws are incommensurable with any fact or factual connection of which sense perception informs us. The laws in question hold of the essences as such, in virtue of their nature (*Wesen*). There is no accidentally-being-so in essences, but rather a necessarily-having-to-be-so, and an in-virtue-of-essence-cannot-be-otherwise. That there are these laws is one of the most important things for philosophy and – if one thinks it out completely – for the world at large. To present them in their purity is, therefore, a significant task of philosophy. But one cannot deny that this task has not been carried out.²⁵

Reinach, however, was exceptional among phenomenologists in the sense that he harshly rejected the role of any kind of sense perception in cognition. He talks about the “unmediated grasp of essences”, “direct intuition of the ideas”, where “no sense perception is required”. He – and as a matter of fact many others in this kind of school of the phenomenological movement – constantly repeats the claim of intuiting independently of sense experience, since real things – that are mostly hidden – are the real objects of philosophy and can be known only by viewing and knowing essences. He says:

I need not have reference to some sense perception [...] Because of this, not only – as is often pointed out – does one need to perceive merely a single case in order to apprehend the apriori laws involved in it; in truth, one also does not need to perceive, to “experience,” the single case. One need perceive nothing at all. Pure imagination suffices. Wherever in the world we find ourselves, the doorway into the world of essences and their laws everywhere and always stands open to us.²⁶

²⁵ Adolf Reinach, Concerning Phenomenology. *The Personalist*, (50.) Spring 1969: 210.

²⁶ Adolf Reinach, *op.cit.* 211.

According to this scheme, one would say that the representatives of the realist phenomenological school do not adopt any form of description of non-necessary facts. In this sense – referring back to our previous example in the introduction – investigating the phenomenon of the holy, they would not be interested in different, historically defined manifestations of the holiness: the holy among the Incas, the holy among the Tuva people, etc. In this historical context description would mean having a connection with the temporal and contingent facts of the world. This, however, cannot be applied to, for example, Reinach as well as to Scheler, since - while they – use examples taken from everyday life, and constantly refer to non-necessary facts, they seek knowledge about the eternal necessary essences of things, thus transcending the changing temporal examples as such (we can say this about all realist phenomenologists). Now, in my view, the application of examples means having an authentic connection with the world itself, which does not necessarily mean, however, the study of all contingent forms in which these essences are concretized or the cognitive value of concrete sense perceptions. The phenomenologist, however, should grasp the main idea of sense perception and apply examples as well as concrete descriptions: getting to understand the pure essences via the simple, everyday datum-orientedness of their concrete embodiments. The main reason why many of the phenomenologists discuss what the phenomena are not is that they are in fact aware of the abundance and richness of the worldly phenomena, in contrast to those, who, because of their erroneous concept of life-world, reduce cognition to sense experience. The phenomenologist knows that the multifariousness of the world – which is a gift and a task for man at the same time – requires distinctions and disassociations with meticulous care. In this sense, there is no more sublime a task for a philosopher than to assume responsibility for faithfully understanding and interpreting the world. Accomplishing his ministry man (the philosopher) encounters phenomena similar to the phenomenon he wants to know philosophically. Therefore, when the phenomenologist

tells us what the phenomenon is not, he is acting correctly; he delimits what does not belong to the phenomenon he aims at. In this sense, the refusal of limiting experience to sense experience in phenomenology means a rejection of the erroneous concept of the life-world held by a materialistic positivism. This attitude is in fact a life-affirmation and not the aristocratic turning away from life and the world with which the Platonic idealism (which can be considered as a kind of proto-phenomenology) has often been charged.

The second reason for the absence of positive definitions in phenomenology is due to its peculiar nature. While all other sciences allow positive as well as negative descriptions of their objects on the basis of observation and of reasoning directed at the object of observation, in the science of phenomenology something that is meant to be the object of its investigation is not observable in terms of the observation of “everyday” objects. The object of phenomenological philosophy is brought into mental view in terms of a peculiar phenomenological attitude. In the phenomenological attitude, however, nothing is empirically observable. In spite of the ultimate indefinability of urphenomena a non-reductive, purely essential definition of an essence in terms of its fundamental marks is possible.

The preliminary Understanding of the Phenomenon of World-Openness

The main reason why we cannot omit this negative way, the way of “from behind”, is that it is required by the thing itself. A preliminary understanding, however, even in its primordial form, is always a pre-requisite, that is, it is prior to any other knowledge. It precedes every kind of negative as well as positive approaches to different phenomena. This preliminary knowledge of a specific phenomenon is not explicit, but implicit, though it can be explained and made explicit by careful consideration. Our question is: what is the preliminary understanding of the phenomenon of world-openness? Moreover, in what sense does this understanding differ from other understandings?

I think that, as in all instances, we have to proceed from our preliminary understanding of the phenomenon. Based on this preliminary understanding, we can also formulate an initial definition of the phenomenon under discussion. The concept of “definition” in this case has to be taken in a wider sense. It is not the clue to the entirety of the thing itself, but it can highlight and bring into prominence a few essential aspects of the thing. This “definition” is not necessarily like the ancient and medieval definition of things by the help of the *genus proximum* and *differentia specifica*. In the light of this discussion I propose a name for this kind of definition that seeks to capture what is given in a preliminary understanding that precedes all definitions: it is a working (preliminary, first hand or minimum) definition. Nevertheless, this working definition is not a “lighter” version of the traditional definitions, and does not hinder the deeper understanding of the notions of essence and real definition, and in no way holds that nominal (I mean by nominal definition the Scholastic *definitio nominalis*, that is, the etymological definition) and real definition (I mean by real definition the Scholastic *definitio realis*, that is, the articulation of the essence of the thing) are only a matter of convention and the *definiendum* is a sheer word. With the application of working definition I think we can reveal, or at least attain, the essence of what is to be defined. With the application of this preliminary working definition we attain a definition which allows us to proceed prior to a full clarification and which does not pretend to express the essence of a thing prematurely.

As a working definition its original basis is the everyday experience: the experience of the phenomenon as it is found in the non-reflective approach. One of the main tasks of the phenomenological reflection in its further investigation is, however, to stick precisely to this feature, namely to the observation of things as they are given to us in their everyday experience.

Now, the preliminary understanding based on everyday experience (which, as a matter of fact means a primordial, immediate contact with the thing itself) suggests that world-openness has something to do with human beings – and not with animals –, and presumably it is one of the many genuine human characteristics that belong to man in virtue of his being a person. Even our pre-philosophical understanding suggests that world-openness belongs to the everyday experience of our existence. We may experience our own world-openness, or also the openness of someone else. There are instances in our worldly life when we are the subjects of world-openness and there are other instances when we are the objects of someone's openness.²⁷

Being open to the world, according to the common usage, means not being narrow-minded or imprisoned in one's own 'self-world'. It is one among the many peculiarities of man that expresses that human beings look forward to see something that is "outside" them. In its common usage "being open to the world" means being oriented toward something or someone. Nevertheless, this preliminary and pre-philosophical understanding needs a further explication and a deeper analysis, since animals are also open to something different from themselves. Based on this insight, however, we usually do not call animals world-open beings. The world-openness of man, therefore, has to be distinguished from the "world-openness" of animals. In the next chapters (see chapter 2.8.) on the difference between openness and instincts we will deal with this problem in detail. At this point let me remark that animals, in contrast to humans, act and interact with the world unconsciously, guided by their instincts. In the instinct-determined world of animals there is no room for real freedom and consequently there is no room for real openness. In comparison to the openness of the animal to the surrounding parts of the world, to some things or aspects in the world, man's

²⁷ In respect of our previous insights we must ask ourselves constantly whether we are ambushed and again apply nothing more than stereotypes and tautologies. I think, however, that there are instances when the subject matter is so obvious that all statements about it seem to be useless repetition of the same content. The description of self-evident truths, such as the description of world-openness, is therefore always "floating" and often useless.

world-openness includes some grasp of the temporal and spatial world in its totality, and beyond this to the whole cosmos, all visible and invisible things in it, and beyond all this, to being as such and thus to all being, finite and infinite, world and God. Grasping the totality, that springs from certain a priori directedness to the entirety of the material and spiritual aspects of the world, let alone the faculty of grasping the fullness of absolute being that precisely differs from the contingent world, is totally missing in the animal world. An animal – even if it interacts with the world at an incomparably higher speed compared to man, as for example in running, fighting, etc. – grasps or is concerned only with one particular or limited aspects of the totality. Man, on the other hand, has the faculty of grasping all beings (*ta panta*) rather than only some sphere of being. Furthermore, the proper object of man's openness is the absolute being and not only finite and contingent ones.

The openness that we can observe in the case of animals is not the main concern of our thesis. We cannot be satisfied with this somewhat minimized view of world-openness; we have to penetrate into the full meaning of the phenomenon. What we can say at this point is that the animal openness – that is, an impersonal being's – openness is not the phenomenon we are looking for and precisely lacks the aspect of totality in personal world-openness.

Nevertheless, concerning the nature of world-openness, we are somewhat in the same situation as Saint Augustine found himself in his *Confessions*. He was perplexed by the fundamental, but at the same time trivial and seemingly “simple” question concerning the essence of time. He was unable to answer the question, although according to his preliminary and pre-philosophical understanding he ought to have been able to give a response. Now, the same goes for the phenomenon of world-openness. If no one asks what it is, we know what it is. But, if someone wants to know the essence of world-openness, we don't know the answer and become acutely aware that giving expression to the essence of a thing in an explicit

philosophical *prise de conscience* is a far more complicated enterprise than having a first naïve experience and conception of it.

There is a huge difference here, however. Time is a fundamental and clearly identifiable datum which all of us know in a pre-philosophical way and of which all human beings speak daily. World-openness is spoken of only by a few philosophers and is a very “young” term; it refers, as we have already said, to a great variety of things and therefore cannot be compared to the clear and fundamental data, and consequently ought to be approached with greatest caution.

Nevertheless, one point should be clear: preliminary understandings – independently of how primitive they could be in respect of philosophical eloquence – help us to get closer to the phenomenon. Moreover, we are not able to formulate one single meaningful statement concerning phenomena of any kind, if we do not refer to our pre-philosophical understanding of them. Even the opening sentences of this section – and as a matter of fact, of all phenomenological analyses – are meaningless and miss the point if we don’t give credit to pre-scientific understandings. Thus we simply know that the world-openness is “one fundamental characteristic of human beings”, and that this characteristic has much more to do with human beings than animals, and, as a matter of fact, serves to distinguish them. As in the case of time in Augustine, we are in contact with the problem through everyday experience. What I am trying to develop here concerning the everyday experience of the phenomenon of world-openness is somewhat similar to Heidegger's theory of “average everydayness”. Heidegger in his “Being and Time” says that man or *Dasein* exists in an ordinary and undifferentiated way during most of his lifetime. It is, however, in its simple way, an authentic relation. Heidegger's main project, that is, uncovering the essential structure of *Dasein*, can be done in different ways. The analysis of *Dasein*'s everydayness serves as one path for it. According to Heidegger, in our everyday lives the being-in-the-world, that is (if I

might put it in this way) our original openness to the world, already possesses some vague and average understanding of the totality.²⁸ I think we can fully agree with Heidegger, that everydayness and everyday experience can provide a certain type of knowledge, which is fragmented and partial, but can be conceived as genuine access to the things themselves. It seems sometimes that this knowledge is poor and insufficient. However, it is enough to start a serious investigation. Though this first-hand knowledge is still not complete, the use of it is similar to the knowledge of using a computer by a child. The child does not know the constitutive elements of that device, but, in spite of this, he can use it quite well. A simple use and a reduced reflection of this use, however, cannot satisfy us. It is therefore necessary to carry out a profound philosophical inquiry exceeding – and in this sense incorporating – all naïve understandings, even if those naïve understandings can provide true insights concerning the very essence of the phenomenon. We have to step therefore behind the child and explain to him step by step the real nature of the object of his everyday concern.

The phenomenon of world-openness, however, is not a crystal clear phenomenon. It does not stand before us in an immediately intellectually graspable lucidity. On the other hand, it is not totally unclear either. The term being unclear or compound has at least two distinct meanings. By the concept “being unclear” I do not mean only the composite nature of a phenomenon in the sense that it would require extremely hard work to unfold its meaningful structure. There are many phenomena in the world, which are also of a compound nature; nevertheless, I do not think that all of them bear a philosophical relevance. There are human phenomena such as the reading of a philosophically relevant book, which are of compound nature and seem to have some kind of philosophical relevance. The reading of a book (even if it is on a philosophical topic) from the viewpoint of the act of reading, however, bears no

²⁸ “Accordingly, *Dasein*'s 'average everydayness' can be defined as 'Being-in-the-world' which is falling and disclosed, thrown and projecting, and for which its own most potentiality-for-Being is an issue, both its Being alongside the »world« and in its 'Being-with-others'.” Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, New York: Harper & Row, 1962: 225.

philosophical relevance whatsoever except inasmuch as it leads us beyond the text to the things themselves of which the text speaks, not even if the action is in connection with a human being, which would suggest that it has at least an anthropological importance. Nevertheless, it would be an enormous task to describe adequately and give a full account on the phenomenon of reading. No doubt one could do that and could formulate sound statements about it, but philosophically it would hardly have any significance. It follows that it is not the complexity that defines what is philosophically significant and what is not.

There is, however, another meaning of the complexity and the concept of “being unclear”, which certainly deserves more attention. In my view, there is also a phenomenon that we can call philosophical complexity. It seems however that the primary objects of philosophy are simple and immediately graspable phenomena, whereas complex phenomena bear less philosophical value. Dietrich von Hildebrand says in his book on the nature of Philosophy, that Philosophy is distinct from other sciences in the sense that it has a proper method and object. He says: “The object of philosophy is primarily of an apriori nature. A specific characteristic of philosophical knowledge is its principal aim, namely, to discover apriori and not empirical states of facts.”²⁹ He characterized the object of a priori philosophical knowledge as having (1) “strict intrinsic necessity” and (2) “incomparable intelligibility” and a priori philosophical knowledge itself as possessing (3) “absolute certainty”.

Now, according to this scheme, it seems that complex phenomena are not really genuine objects of a philosophical inquiry. Above we said that the phenomenon of world-openness is complex. The main problem, however, with the phenomenon of world-openness is not that it is complex, but it might be that the term a) refers to a whole series of quite different phenomena and b) that perhaps none of them is entirely “clear” or possesses a

²⁹ Hildebrand, D. von, *What is Philosophy?* Milwaukee: Routledge, 1991: 63.

necessary essence or that it is at least hard to find. Nevertheless, independently of the complexity of a phenomenon, if – after a careful phenomenological investigation – it really turns out to be philosophically meaningful, valuable and important, there is no doubt that the topic in question is of authentic philosophical nature. It is true that a philosopher regarding the objects he investigates strives for an absolute certainty, and wishes to comprehend something characterized by strict intrinsic necessity and incomparable intelligibility.³⁰ Nonetheless, in case of a complex and hardly identifiable worldly phenomenon, it seems that we have to prescind from the above mentioned characteristics of the nature of real, a priori philosophical knowledge or at least not remain silent about this phenomenon because we have not yet reached ultimate clarity of understanding it. I think that the complexity of a phenomenon shouldn't hinder us from penetrating the object as deeply as we can. As a matter of fact, if we do not make an attempt and complete the intellectual unfolding of a complex phenomenon, we do not even know whether it was of philosophical or non-philosophical significance. Moreover, examples of great philosophers of past centuries show that there is hardly any immediate achievement in the history of philosophical reasoning. Great and valuable thoughts are most of all the result of yearlong or lifelong serious thinking. The “laborious way of self-knowledge” (to world-openness) is not an instantaneous project, but requires huge efforts. In case of complex phenomena, I think that the point of philosophical reasoning is the same as it is in the case of the a priori knowledge. Therefore, I claim that in pursuing the phenomenological investigation, the task of the philosopher is to tell whether some or none of the elements of the phenomenon (or the phenomenon itself) bear the characteristic of strict necessity, certainty and intelligibility or not. Only after clarifying this can we take into consideration the possible philosophical significance of a phenomenon. This requires the deepest intellectual seriousness and perseverance and involves the whole being of the

³⁰ This does not exclude, however, that less contingent essences cannot be the objects of a philosophical investigation. See: Josef Seifert, *Discours des Méthodes. The Methods of Philosophy and Realist Phenomenology*. Frankfurt / Paris / Ebikon / Lancaster / New Brunswick: Ontos-Verlag, 2009.

philosopher. This insight completely corresponds to one of the main concerns of the phenomenological movement, namely the re-definition of thinking.³¹ Consequently, we have to take the risk of finding the way back to appropriate thinking. In my view “finding the way back to thinking” means to destroy and reconstruct all what genuine philosophy and its objects are, that is, our task is *dubitando ad veritatem pervenire*. Therefore, distinctions, specifications, analyses, argumentations and comparisons in this thesis will serve only one purpose: to answer the question whether the term of World-openness refers to a whole series of quite different phenomena, and to tell which of them is “clear” or possesses a necessary essence and finally to tell what is the proper understanding of the phenomenon of man’s World-openness.

Not every phenomenon of the world around us deserves philosophical attention. In addition, there are aspects and interpretations of different phenomena, which are also not of a philosophical nature, although the phenomenon can have philosophical significance in another respect. Following this train of thought, however, we can say that there are aspects, interpretations and forms of a phenomenon, which are eminently philosophical. We see immediately, for example, that the phenomenon of driving a car or riding a horse has no appreciable philosophical aspect. Of course we can talk analogically about the “philosophy” of horseback riding and we can formulate philosophically meaningful sentences using analogies concerning the richness of the beauty of horseback riding, but the phenomenon still does not lend itself to being a suitable object of philosophical investigation.

I consider the phenomenon of world-openness a multi-faceted though philosophically meaningful phenomenon. In itself, the phenomenon of world-openness can have bad and good, less bad and less good interpretations, i.e., descriptions. At the beginning of our phenomenological analysis of world-openness it seems reasonable to tell which of the

³¹ I indicated this in the introduction of the thesis.

interpretations I consider to be good and philosophically more significant than other interpretations. Without doing this, the phenomenon of world-openness remains ambiguous and we will get lost in the different (and many times contradictory) meanings of the phenomenon and phenomena, which are so alike to the true phenomenon of world-openness that we can become disorientated.

Since entities of the world do not constitute independent universes, it's obvious that a phenomenon could bear resemblance to numberless similar phenomena, which in one way or another can have something in common. For example, in the phenomenological investigation of the phenomenon of spousal love one has to investigate – among others – the phenomena of friendship, sexual desire and many other phenomena, which have something in common with, or are related in some – even in negative – ways to, spousal love. One has to analyze the common and distinct characteristics and the relation between things in order to have an insight into what the essences of spousal love and other forms of love are. Now, the realization of this whole process comprises the investigation of numerous different forms of love. The method of phenomenology therefore can be considered – as Max Scheler puts it – a “genuine positivism”,³² or – as Dietrich von Hildebrand says – an “empiricism of essences”. The enumeration of similar phenomena, however, cannot go *ad infinitum*. Now, returning to our example, it wouldn't make any sense to study the phenomenon of the fad of stamp-collecting as one form of the appearance of love. Including all the phenomena with minor resemblance to the original problem of spousal love would make a phenomenology of spousal love an endless and hopeless endeavor. The examination of the phenomenon of the fad for stamp-collecting is pointless from the aspect of the problem of spousal love, since it doesn't add anything to the clarification of the phenomenon in question. There are minor

³² See Max Scheler, “Phenomenology and the Theory of Cognition” in: Max Scheler, *Selected Philosophical Essays*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973: 138: “The 'ray' of reflection should try to touch only what is 'there' in the closest and most living contact and only so far as it is there. In this sense, but only in this, phenomenological philosophy is the most radical *empiricism* and positivism.”

commonalities in the phenomenon of spousal love and the fad for stamp-collecting, since both have an object, both can be considered as an attitude, both have a temporal and spatial duration, and so on and so forth, but essentially – which would necessitate a generic similarity, as for example we can see it in the example of spousal love and friendship – they do not share common points. However, the most important difference is that the phenomenon of spousal love has philosophical relevance and significance, whereas the phenomenon of the fad for stamp-collecting has not, at least not inasmuch as it is the specific stamp-collector's fad rather than being considered just as the phenomenon of fad as such, which also has some, though perhaps minimal, philosophical relevance. In other words, the phenomenon of spousal love has a philosophically graspable and understandable essence; it is philosophically significant.

There is another typical error that a phenomenologist can commit, when he supposes that there exists a philosophically meaningful essence, when in reality there is no such phenomenon. The existence of the notion (*Begriff*) of a thing does not necessary mean that there also is found a real essence of the thing.

There are two basic forms of this kind of error. The first form is when man speaks about an unreal or even impossible Idea (pseudo-“phenomenon”) as if it existed in reality. The concept of “classless society” or the idea of “tolerance as genuine substitution of love” are examples of the first kind of error.³³ I think, however, in all these cases there can be found a philosophical contradiction between the state of affairs and the corresponding propositions. In other words, although these statements are grammatically well-formed, they are *in re* intrinsically impossible. It is a common error of philosophers and thinkers³⁴ of all times,

³³ I think philosophically one can never argue for a classless (or in other words, non-divided) society, except perhaps in some transcendent, heavenly world, and even less of tolerance as a substitution of love, which is eternally impossible. These ideas are self-contradictions.

³⁴ Nowadays especially politicians, political scientists and pseudo-philosophers commit this error. They are near similar to the Sophists of the ancient Greek society.

especially of our time, that they speak about non-existing phenomena, which do not exist in reality or are not even possible phenomena but contain inherent contradictions.³⁵

The other form of the error which a phenomenologist can commit is when he philosophically speaks about phenomena which have no philosophical significance whatsoever. In this case, the phenomenon investigated can have real existence and can even be a highly interesting problem, but be lacking in those components that make its exploration philosophically meaningful. Both cases can be considered as special instances of what Wittgenstein called a language game. I think, Wittgenstein's vision³⁶ concerning the potentiality of the free use of notions, which as a matter of fact can constitute a “new tower of Babel”,³⁷ is true. We can create new, independent universes only by the simple use of words. The significance of this observation in respect of our theme is that this is precisely the symptom we have to avoid, namely, speaking about a phenomenon that does not exist. To sum up, we can say that the existence of a notion does not guarantee the real existence of the notion as a phenomenon, nor that it possesses a philosophical relevance. It is therefore one of the preliminary requirements of the investigation of the phenomenon of world-openness to assume that it is an authentic and hence detectable objective phenomenon.

We have to emphasize the importance of the aforementioned statement, since in the case of the phenomenon of world-openness one might think, at first sight, that this is not a real phenomenon, and, because of its usage in common language, which is very different from its philosophical use, it has no philosophical significance whatsoever. Due to its everyday usage, the concept of world-openness, when confused with its philosophical and essential anthropological meaning, can lead to a misleading understanding of the term. In its everyday usage it means a certain type of open-mindedness. In everyday usage a “world-open” person

³⁵ This mistake is committed also by earlier thinkers, for example by Kant when he speaks of the transcendental ego or the transcendental deduction.

³⁶ Or see Rudolf Carnap's remarks on the notion of 'babig'.

³⁷ I borrow this term from Dietrich von Hildebrand.

is, for example, one who is willing to accept or tolerate different cultural goods. With the notion of world-openness we refer to someone being open to the cultural goods, or to one who is able to adjust himself quickly to different situations. We call a person open-minded or world-open who is willing to consider new ideas and contemplates without prejudice the values (or disvalues) of a thing or a person. Nowadays, we say that a person is open to the world when he travels a lot and visits exotic places with an open mind and ready to recognize their value though they are entirely different from what is used from home.

In certain ways, especially nowadays, world-openness has become a synonym for tolerance in the common language. Now, according to its definition (tolerance is a policy of patient forbearance in the presence of something that is disliked or disapproved of), tolerance may be far from an ideal policy, since it contains the acceptance, or at least the silence or even permission of something which is not only believed to be wrong but which at times ought not be tolerated by an individual or by the law. I think, however, that this kind of view of the phenomenon of world-openness is – from our point of view – a complete misunderstanding and leads us astray, at least in the sense that it withholds the realization of a true phenomenological investigation of a radically different phenomenon. Such a distorted or limited view of world-openness cannot satisfy us; it is especially poor for a strict philosophical analysis. The meaning of world-openness that I am going to use throughout the thesis has nothing to do with this common usage of the word.

The second preliminary main characteristic of world-openness is, besides the fact that we consider it a phenomenon and not a notion, its presumptive philosophical character. I claim therefore that world-openness can be investigated in its ultimate reason and principle, and by the same token, this knowledge is acquired by the aid of human intellect alone.

Thirdly, it seems to be useful to try to define the “subject” of world-openness. By the term subject I mean the being, who or that can be the bearer of the characteristic of world-

openness. Now, at the beginning of our speculations we already possess the preliminary insight that world-openness is exclusively a personal phenomenon and cannot be attributed to impersonal beings. The preliminary understanding of world-openness suggests that non-human animals or things cannot be open towards the world as, for example, human beings can. Moreover, we also know that this difference is not only a quantitative one. At the first sight it seems that impersonal beings, such as animals, possess (in terms of quantity) “less” openness than human beings. Since animals can move, hunt, hide themselves, use different signs in communication, have numerous interactions with the world, or even fly, we have the impression that they are also open to the world, and there is only a quantitative difference between man and animals. In case of unmoving entities however the question of being open to the world doesn't even arise. It's clear for us that stones, books, elements and objects are incapable of interactions, therefore, they are not open to the world. In other words, they do not possess the character of openness, except in completely different ways such as the “openness” of clay to receive any form, or the sense in which Aristotle attributes to prime matter a kind of infinite “openness to all forms,” but it is obvious that here we speak of entirely different things connected only through some distant and vague analogies.

From the aspect of immovable entities, we immediately see that we can speak only analogously about the openness of all impersonal beings. The capability of changing position, the interaction framed by instincts, the apparent freedom and apparent sophistication of behavior-patterns do not enable animals to be open to the world in its real sense as a man can. Animals, as impersonal beings, though they are certainly “closer” to persons than all other kinds of impersonal beings, cannot be considered being (world-)open in the true sense of the term because of their restricted access to reality. (Here we again applied Scheler's distinction between the world (*Welt*) of man and the surroundings (*Umwelt*) of animals and claimed that animals have access only to their surroundings, which is only a limited access in comparison

to man's access to the world.) Consequently, the character of being open to the world can be attributed only to conscious, personal beings. It means that the bearer of the character of world- and God-openness can be either man or angel, or both. In my view, since both are conscious, personal beings, they are both world- and God-open. The reason why, in spite of this, I say that world-openness is principally a human characteristic is because of the bodily existence of the human being. Existing in a body is an exceptional status. Angels – and on this occasion let us accept the existence of angels – are pure spirits, i.e. self-subsistent forms, and they are completely incorporeal and have no bodies of any kind.³⁸ In this sense, they have less interaction with the actual world – whatever it is in its proper meaning – than human beings have.³⁹ In consequence of this, their openness to, and interaction with, the world is no doubt different from the one human beings have. Given their much higher natural knowledge of God, they are no doubt by nature much more capable of God-openness than we, and no doubt are open to, and interact with, the deepest realms of the world, other angels and human souls in ways in which we cannot do so. As they also know all material beings much more consciously and deeply than we, they are by nature more capable of being related to the world as a whole. Moreover, while they obviously do not regularly speak or interact with human beings in the ways we are able to do so, they interact in other respects more profoundly with the human beings whom they protect and know better than we know them. At least many religious persons believe that they are also present in a more perfect way in our moral and religious acts than the average human person is. Therefore, if angels exist, they are certainly not less able to be world-open and to transcend a mere environment and hence cannot be said to be less world-open than we.

Nonetheless, there are certain forms and appearances of the world wherewith they never interact. Therefore, I think that we have to lay emphasis not only on the factual

³⁸ See Saint Thomas Aquinas, *ST* Ia 50,2

³⁹ Or, at least, we don't know the degree of their interaction with this world.

existence of the world in the discussion about world-openness but also on the material and bodily part of this world and the access to it inasmuch as it presupposes the human body. Man's unique place in nature also comprises man's unique access to this world. In a certain sense we can consider this feature as perfection, as for example martyrdom, which man can possess but angels cannot. The reason why I consider world-openness principally a human feature has to do precisely with man's this-worldly and his bodily character. It is natural for humans to know through their bodies, and for their souls to enliven their bodies. Angels, on the other hand, are pure intellects and not naturally united to a body. Consequently, angels know things in a way that is radically different from how humans act and know.⁴⁰ Now, knowing things through the body and being related in many other forms to the body can be considered as part of the specific human form of world-openness in which the bodily aspect of the human being plays an indispensable role.

Fourthly, in its preliminary sense of world-openness we usually refer to an object having or showing a higher quality of character. Even in its common usage we presuppose that it has a certain direction, which we are open to, and this direction must be, on the one hand, something that is extrinsic to man, and on the other hand, something having a certain value which man does not possess. The fourth preliminary characteristic of world-openness is therefore that it portrays man as a being of lack. Man has countless exceptional characteristics, but his whole worldly life is about to achieve higher forms of these characteristics. For example, I think we can agree that man is intelligent, but always has to strive for higher and higher regions of understanding: he wants to know, to acquire always more and more knowledge. In this sense man is open to higher forms of intelligence, or, putting it negatively, man is lacking of full intelligence. At the same time, however, our world-openness reveals that man in a certain sense already possesses implicitly the totality of

⁴⁰ See *ST* Ia 51,1

being. By this I mean that man, in spite of his deficiencies and contingent nature, is a microcosm. Man is a microcosm, but not in the sense that man would be the homunculus that is a tiny pattern of the astronomical universe, but in a traditional philosophical sense, which says that although man is only one creature among the many, he is predisposed to know or at least to reflect the totality. In this sense we can say that world-openness is the chance or opportunity to recover man's worldly imperfections. By the use of the notion "being of lack" I mean, that affirming man's openness, we at the same time affirm his deficiency and imperfection. Man, being a "creature of defect" (as Arnold Gehlen called man *Mängelwesen* or *homo inermis*⁴¹), calls for an "object" or "objects" to fulfill his shortcomings. To a first approximation, this object is indefinite, because man has countless faculties, orientations, talents, abilities, etc., which all have their different objects. Insofar as man is a deficient being (*Mängelwesen*), he is a creature of openness (*Offenheitskreatur*) as well as an object-and aim-directed being (*Finalitätswesen*).

Fifthly, there is a preliminary meaning of world-openness, which is related again to its final direction and object. The deficiency of the being of man and his desire to overcome this deficiency shows that the object of his openness must have the character of the fullness of being, which satisfies all his needs and imperfections. But certainly the – physical-, social-, object-, or any other kind of particular "world" and even the entire world alone as possible object cannot fulfill that desire.

Let me remark that this view of openness utterly differs from the notion of *Mängelwesen* developed by classical German philosophy, shared by Kant, Hegel, Marx and many others. Namely, according to them, the idea of *Mängelwesen* means preeminently a negative trait: man is a being lacking characters, which others, such as animals, can have. These philosophers defined man in contrast to animals and animality. For example, according

⁴¹ See Arnold Gehlen, *Der Mensch: seine Natur und seine Stellung in der Welt*. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1966: 37. (There are other available translations of the term *Mängelwesen*: being with shortcomings, deficient being, etc.)

to Nietzsche, man is an “unfinished animal”. In contrast to this view, world-openness is something positive in the sense of expressing man's capability and striving to transcend his deficiencies. The notion of *Mängelwesen* refers to the unfinished nature of man; it depicts man as a finite and underdetermined being. Considerations about the phenomenon of real openness, however, emphasize that this incompleteness can be overcome and provides an organic definition of man. Man is not only a negative, but structurally a positive being, even if this positive character is in progress (in the sense that man is an organic unity) and hasn't reached its end point.

Man's openness does not stop at particular beings and objects. Entities of particular character solely in themselves cannot justify world-openness. Partial opennesses, such as for example being open to another person, who, by giving good advice helps one to avoid a trouble or mistake, refers only to particular outcome of the object of the advice. Or, I can be open to and I can accept, for example, the points of a lecture given by a professor, nevertheless this openness refers only to a particular object, namely to the points of the lecture. Beyond particularities, however, world-openness, as a human characteristic, aims at the highest and final object. In my understanding therefore, the ultimate object of a real (world-)openness must be an ultimately reasonable being, that is, God. We call, therefore, the ultimate understanding of world-openness ‘God-directedness’. My thesis is that the interpretation of world-openness as God-directedness provides the full understanding of the phenomenon. I keep defending this thesis in spite of criticisms that point out the infinite superiority of God to the world and who therefore hold that the world-openness is an entirely different phenomenon distinct from God-openness. I can fully accept the first part of their proposal, but not the second one, because I consider the phenomenon of world-openness as general, not specified (from the point of view of its object) openness and God-openness as its most important interpretation. On the other hand, however, I will argue in the next chapters

(see chapter 2.4. and Conclusion) that my understanding is philosophically meaningful and more valuable in contrast to other interpretations. The main difference between my understanding of the phenomenon of world-openness and the understanding of Gehlen, Plessner and Portmann, is that they give a physicalist interpretation of the phenomenon of world-openness. In my view, however, the physicalist interpretation is inadequate and fails to do justice to the proprium of man.

Now, this understanding of the phenomenon of world-openness involves another question, namely, are we right to give a religious interpretation to the phenomenon of world-openness? John F. Crosby gives a very simple answer to this question. He says,

If we hold on other grounds [...] that God exists and we human persons are grounded in God, then it becomes natural to recognize in the sense of infinity conditioning our experience of things a certain presence of God in our conscious lives.⁴²

It seems that the theistic reading of our sense of infinity is the only reasonable reading of it if we are consistent.⁴³ Based on a very simple and elemental observation of man's vulnerable and self-unsatisfactory nature, we have arrived at a fundamental insight of all philosophical anthropologies of openness: this is the affirmation of man's peculiar (incomparably higher than animals and any other impersonal creatures) place in nature, which, however, calls for a higher, extrinsic completion. All those philosophies that disregarded this aspect fell into the philosophical trap of hybris. Understanding man's vulnerability and his openness has been of tremendous importance since the first appearance of man, since man himself can overestimate and misunderstand his vocation and essence. Man himself can overestimate – that is to deny – his openness conceiving himself omnipotent as well as man is disposed to overstep his grandeur. When man tries to rival God or gods he falls into the trap of hybris. As a matter of fact, if I might use a theological analogy, hybris was in the same way the origin of the sin of

⁴² Crosby, John F: *The Selfhood of the Human Person*. Washington: D. C. The Catholic University of America Press, 1996: 164.

⁴³ See *ibidem*

the fall. Philosophies of openness, however, are optimistic about the nature of man, namely holding man's openness is neither overestimation nor underestimation, but a realist acceptance of man's place in nature. As Hildebrand puts it: "Man is not a self-sufficient being. The true nature of man can be understood only when we grasp his metaphysical situation and his being ordered toward God."⁴⁴ Later Hildebrand says that this is transcendence and man's transcendence is a "fundamental fact". This fundamental fact means that man is able to communicate with something more comprehensive than himself. Hildebrand identifies this "something greater" with God and says: "The metaphysical situation of man is characterized by the great dialogue between man and God."⁴⁵ It's true, man's openness is for something and points to something. Without acknowledging the God-directedness of man's openness, we can easily lose sight of our original vocation. The reading of man's openness deprived from its proper object and direction results in a distorted picture of man. The man being deprived of God is like a Zombie. This man is a monster – without direction, aims, tasks, and religion. This man is, as a matter of fact, full of hatred and, in absolutizing some finite good, of some form of superstition.⁴⁶

Sixthly, we understand world-openness in its preliminary meaning not only as a structural feature of human beings, or as a simple capacity or possibility, but also as an attitude. According to the classical philosophical definition, attitude is a mental state of approval or disapproval, favoring or disfavoring and is associated with emotion and feeling. In the classical philosophies the term attitude generally designates any mental disposition of a being for or against something or of taking an approving or disapproving, a positive or negative stance towards it. According to this scheme, attitude is concerned with evaluation

⁴⁴ Dietrich von Hildebrand, "The New Tower of Babel." In: Dietrich von Hildebrand: *The New Tower of Babel*. London: Burns & Oates, 1953: 22

⁴⁵ Dietrich von Hildebrand, *op.cit.* 23.

⁴⁶ Hildebrand puts it in this way: "The one who wants to shake off the sacred bond of absolute truth will inevitably fall into the web of the most naïve, uncritical, not to say superstitious, worship of unfounded opinions." Dietrich von Hildebrand, *op.cit.* 19.

and emotional response and comprises also temporality. In this interpretation attitudes can change temporally: sometimes an attitude disappears, sometimes it emerges, even if in this understanding of attitudes, for example of the fundamental moral attitude (*Grundhaltung*) or the fundamental moral attitudes of virtues and vices we find that they may possess a formative and lasting, superactual presence in the person rather than coming and going. But even here they can eventually change, for example in a becoming evil of a good person and in the conversion of an evil person.

I think, however, that there is another interpretation of the notion of attitude that does not belong so much to the moral life of free or affective attitudes and stances but to the intellectual sphere. In the phenomenological movement there were many philosophers who held that the proper understanding of philosophy consists in a certain type of change of attitude. Among them, it was Adolf Reinach who described this change with an exceptional clarity in his short essay entitled “*Concerning Phenomenology*”. According to Adolf Reinach phenomenology is a special “way of seeing” and “attitude” incomparable with the observation of natural sciences. Sometimes he also speaks of a phenomenological method rather than of a phenomenological attitude. He says:

For the essential point is this, that phenomenology is not a matter of a system of philosophical propositions and truths – a system of propositions in which all who call themselves »Phenomenologists« must believe, and which I could here prove to you – but rather it is a method of philosophizing which is required by the problems of philosophy.⁴⁷

According to Reinach, there are numerous kinds of attitudes. There are two, which are discussed in detail in this essay. There is, for example, the attitude peculiar to the natural sciences, and there is the attitude peculiar to philosophical objects. These real philosophical objects require a certain phenomenological, that is, essence-concentrating or essence-intuiting attitude. Only within the framework of this attitude can we concentrate on the “things in

⁴⁷ Adolf Reinach, *op. cit.* 194.

themselves". It means that with the help of "*epoché*"⁴⁸ one can get an intellectual intuition of the "essences" of the observed things. With this *Wesensschau* one can discover truths which are *a priori* and not *a posteriori*; truths, which are neither based on empirical experiences, nor causal analysis.⁴⁹

Dietrich von Hildebrand also developed a profound understanding of attitudes. Hildebrand claims that there is nothing higher among natural values than moral values. As a second step he says, that only man can behave morally in the proper sense of the word.⁵⁰ Now, for Hildebrand the question poses itself: how can man participate in values?⁵¹ In his answer, Hildebrand refers to man's freedom and introduces the notion of attitude. Concerning attitudes he says, that

they can grow out of conscious, free attitudes; man himself must essentially cooperate for their realization. They can only develop through his conscious, free abandonment of himself to genuine values. In proportion to man's capacity to grasp values, in so far as he sees the fullness of the world of values with a clear and fresh vision, in so far as his abandonment to this world is pure and unconditional, will he be rich in moral values.⁵²

In his view attitude is the disposition of grasping interesting and valuable things in themselves.⁵³ This, however, requires an exceptional effort from man, namely, the rejection of

⁴⁸ According to Josef Seifert there are four senses of *epoché*, which one has to take into account here: 1. prescinding from real existence in the context of essential analysis. 2. phenomenological reduction as suspension of belief in the 'transcendent existence' of the world. 3. phenomenological reduction. 4. suspension of transcendence not only of existence but of '*Wesensgesetze*' as well. See Josef Seifert, *Back to the 'Things in Themselves'. A Phenomenological Foundation for Classical Realism*. New York and London: Routledge, 1987: II. Part 2.

⁴⁹ Or see Dietrich von Hildebrand: "What is also new in phenomenology is its emphasis on the existential, immediate intuitive contact with the object, in opposition to any abstractionism or any dealing with mere concepts." Dietrich von Hildebrand, *What is Philosophy?*, London and New York: Routledge 1991: 224.

⁵⁰ See Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Fundamental Moral Attitudes*, New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 1950. pp. 1-2.

⁵¹ Basically he distinguishes three modes of this participation. See for more in Dietrich von Hildebrand, The Modes of Participation in Value, in: *International Philosophical Quarterly*. New York. Vol. I. Nr. 1. 1961. pp. 58-84.

⁵² Dietrich von Hildebrand *Fundamental Moral Attitudes*, New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 1950. pp. 2-3.

⁵³ Of course this is a simplified generalization of his deep thoughts on moral attitudes. His philosophically much deeper analysis is in *Sittlichkeit und ethische Werterkenntnis. Eine Untersuchung über ethische Strukturprobleme*. Habilitationsschrift. (München: Bruckmann, 1918), vollständig abgedruckt in: *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, Band 5. Halle: Niemeyer. 1922. S. 462-602. Sonderdruck der Habilitationsschrift, ebd. 1921. Reprint Vols. 3-6 (1916-1923) 1989. Bad Feilnbach 2: Schmidt Periodicals; 2. Auflage (unveränderter reprographischer Nachdruck, zusammen mit der Dissertation *Die Idee der sittlichen*

his selfish and auto-oriented concerns. According to Hildebrand, a really virtuous man, having developed the right attitude, won't by-pass values and won't leave them unanswered.⁵⁴

This is precisely the profound meaning, which we would like to apply here to world-openness and which clearly differs from other philosophical concepts of attitude. There are two main points which I would like to emphasize here. The first is that world-openness as “attitude”, in contrast to the classical definition, is not only a mental attitude. In our preliminary understanding we have to see, that world-openness comprises the whole of the person and not only single distinct acts or mental states. The sense of the notion of world-openness, what I would like to use, is not like the restricted openness of a child for example, who might be open to the story of a tale and listens to it attentively. We are open to the world in its totality and not only in few aspects of this totality, and with our totality as spiritual persons, not just with this or that single act.

The second peculiarity which characterizes world-openness as an “attitude”, is its independence from particular short spans of time as those during which, for example, a headache or pain in the finger last. While this is also true of superactual attitudes, such as virtue and vices, what we call world-openness is even more independent of temporal change.⁵⁵ For while superactual attitudes like goodness, faithfulness, veracity, etc., are temporal in the sense that they can be generated and cease to be in time, openness is not temporal in this sense, since it stems from the ontological structure of man. For example the attitude of faithfulness might be the subject of temporal change: from a certain point on it appears, at a certain point in time it can cease to be. Even in an “everlasting love”, since it also has a beginning, that is a

Handlung), , hrsg. v. der Dietrich-von-Hildebrand-Gesellschaft (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1969), S. 126-266; 3., durchgesehene Auflage (Vallendar-Schönstatt: Patris Verlag, 1982)

⁵⁴ A good thematization of Hildebrand's ideas on value-response are found in the first chapter of his book on the nature of love. Dietrich von Hildebrand, *The Nature of Love*. South Bend: St. Augustine's Press, 2009.

⁵⁵ My understanding of the attitudes' independence from temporality is similar to the views as that of Dietrich von Hildebrand. Hildebrand calls attention to the superactual character of many personal attitudes, and notes the importance of superactual existence for the depth and continuity of personal life. He says, however, that attitudes having a superactual character still take place in time and form in time. This notion is amply developed in Dietrich von Hildebrand's *Christian Ethics*, 2nd edition (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978) Chapter 17.

terminus a quo, the attitude of faithfulness bears the character of temporality. World-openness, though more properly speaking the structural, ontological one than the attitude, on the other hand, is in some sense simply there, even if it is realized in a reduced or partial or even in a totally repressed form.

Taking into consideration this difference, it seems reasonable in regard to the first of these phenomena not to speak about the attitude of openness, since it is not an attitude at all. Moreover, inasmuch as it is an attitude, it is not simply one among the many, but rather a very peculiar and a kind of attitude that is only somewhat similar to other attitudes. In the conclusion of the thesis, we shall sharply distinguish between a kind of metaphysical world-openness or God-openness which is constitutive for a person and hence always there by nature, and the attitude of world-openness. Now, it seems that here we have developed a third meaning of world-openness, since our characterization suggests that this phenomenon is neither an attitude nor a constitutive trait of human being (but perhaps rather both at the same time). Without going into detailed discussion of this trait, I would say that the underivable character of world-openness is due to its being an arch-phenomenon. Max Scheler said that arch-phenomena have “genuine essences” and possess an irreducible and original identity. Now, I think that in the search of the irreducible and original identity of the phenomenon of world-openness an excursus like this is meaningful and valid until an essential definition (if there is such a definition) is found.

In the framework of the preliminary understanding of world-openness as an attitude that is different from the constitutive ontological openness of which we have spoken, we can say that openness is that by means of which man takes a position toward the world which opens his spiritual eyes and enables him to grasp not only neutral facts but also and primarily values. Moreover, it is only man who can realize moral values, and the proper “place” or root of their realization is his openness as attitude. The phenomenon of world-openness as attitude

is therefore essentially openness to values. In other words, this openness is the “basis” of the whole moral life, since it is precisely that which precedes all moral attitudes and thus also differs from what might be called the fundamental moral attitude or fundamental moral option and has more the character of a condition of the latter, being more a cognitive attitude than a moral one that has the character of a response. Openness, inasmuch as it is an attitude, is the indispensable presupposition of the attitude of goodness, generosity, patience, faithfulness, reverence, etc., etc. For example goodness presupposes openness in the sense that there is no other-directedness⁵⁶ in goodness if man is not open to the other. The basic disposition of openness, as their presupposition, is present in every act of love and goodness⁵⁷ independently of its factual awareness or realization.

Viewed from the very opposite of this attitude we can say that if man is incapable of any abandonment of the self, i.e., if he is closed, then he becomes the prisoner of his egoism and finally becomes blind to values. The value-blindness⁵⁸ of man, in my view, arises first and foremost from his closedness. I consider a man to be absolutely closed when he approaches everything in the world with an unbearable bias and totally ignores the rest of the world. For this man there is only one person in the world, that is himself, and there is only one world: his world. This man sees in everything himself (his idol – which is himself – is his object) and with looks at things exclusively from under his spectacles. This man, as a matter of fact, is alone in the world, since it is himself who disqualifies and who is disqualified. In his negative attitude, he is unable to understand any thing in itself as it manifests itself. For this type of man there are no secrets, holy, hidden domains in the world. Everything is

⁵⁶ Other-directedness is the core of the attitude of goodness.

⁵⁷ “Love is, as it were, flowing goodness, and goodness is the breath of love.” Dietrich von Hildebrand *op. cit.* p. 62.

⁵⁸ The notion of value-blindness was coined by Max Scheler and later used by Dietrich von Hildebrand. The problem of value blindness has been discussed systematically in von Hildebrand's work, *Sittlichkeit und ethische Werterkenntnis*, Halle: M. Niemeyer, 1921 p. 24ff.

obvious and intellectually penetrable. Consequently, the man of closed attitude is unable to see the immeasurable fullness of values, which is beyond his own “horizon”.

There is another type of closedness of human attitudes, which is diametrically opposed to the original meaning of world-openness as attitude. This closedness, however, also results in value-blindness. Dietrich von Hildebrand characterizes this type of closedness as concupiscence. In his understanding this man is the one who,

limits his interest to one thing: whether something is agreeable to him or not, whether it offers him satisfaction, whether or not it can be of any use to him. He sees in all things only that segment which is related to his accidental, immediate interest. Every being is, for him, but a means to his own selfish aim. He drags himself about eternally in the circle of his narrowness, and never succeeds in emerging from himself. Consequently, he also does not know the true and deep happiness which can only flow abandonment to true values, out of contact with what is in itself good and beautiful.⁵⁹

In my view, the man suffering from the second type of value-blindness is somewhat closer to the understanding of what we call values. At least he recognizes value to the extent that it is important for him, but only for him. This is the attitude of one-sided value-recognition, when, although one recognizes the value, one doesn't share it with others and seeks only that which is momentarily useful and pleasurable to oneself. Nevertheless, this is still value-blindness stemming from an attitude opposite to that of openness. In my view when a person utilizes values for his own purposes, we might call this kind of attitude ‘value-shortsightedness’. The man of ‘value-shortsightedness’ recognizes the exceptional character of the value, but disregards certain aspects of it, for example, the communal character of the value of love.⁶⁰

The man of ‘value-shortsightedness’ also gives no adequate answer to the value.

⁵⁹ Dietrich von Hildebrand, *op. cit.* p. 8.

⁶⁰ Here, although I borrow his main term, I do not follow Dietrich von Hildebrand’s analysis in every aspect. On his four types of value blindness see *Sittlichkeit und ethische Werterkenntnis. Eine Untersuchung über ethische Strukturprobleme*. Habilitationsschrift. (München: Bruckmann, 1918), vollständig abgedruckt in: *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, Band 5. Halle: Niemeyer. 1922. S. 462-602. Sonderdruck der Habilitationsschrift, ebd. 1921. Reprint Vols. 3-6 (1916-1923) 1989. Bad Feilnbach 2: Schmidt Periodicals; 2. Auflage (unveränderter reprographischer Nachdruck, zusammen mit der Dissertation *Die Idee der sittlichen*

In contrast to this closedness, openness is a permanent disposition to recognize something superior to one's pleasure and interest, and to be ready to subordinate and abandon oneself. Only openness yields contact with the world, and only openness provides real access to the world of values. Openness, therefore, is an indispensable presupposition for all forms of capacity for values and knowledge about them. Therefore, the requirement of a “conscious and free abandonment” is meaningless without an antecedent openness.

Only openness can be the real framework of the recognition and realization of values. Insofar as man is open to the sublimity of the world of values, capable of giving an answer to these values which call for an adequate answer. The adequacy of his answer, however, does not depend on his openness, since openness is in itself only the possibility; it all depends on man's concrete realizations of these capacities in his factual life-situations. Nevertheless, independently of its realization, we can say that openness is the presupposition for every response to values, every humble subjection to the “in itself important”, and, it is, at the same time, a fundamental component of such response to value. For example, when we rejoice at the success of our children; when a chill comes over us seeing a magnificent painting, or when we are confronted with the numen as *Mysterium Tremendum*, which forces us to our knees and generates unprecedented and radical feelings, such as awe and trembling, etc...etc., in all of these instances the basic attitude (as well as constitutional character) of openness is implied.

Openness as basic attitude and constitutional character of man can be observed on different levels of life. Openness is implied, for example, in all moral conducts toward ourselves and toward our fellowmen. Openness is present in the world of values when man takes into consideration his needs and future, and puts all his efforts into one single act in order to achieve the expected result. When, for example, someone wants to be a good chess

Handlung), hrsg. v. der Dietrich-von-Hildebrand-Gesellschaft (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1969), S. 126-266; 3., durchgesehene Auflage (Vallendar-Schönstatt: Patris Verlag, 1982)

player, one subordinates other aims to this and concentrates on the training of being a good chess player. We would say that this act is the virtue of perseverance or diligence or pertinacity. Yes it is, but we must also see that behind these virtues there is always openness as fundamental attitude. We are open to our future, we are open to our development, we are open to our self-discipline, we are open to our personality, etc. Before all subordinations and sacrifices to ourselves, there is openness. To see, for example, the preciousness of something, that, by the way, contributes one's personality, one has to be open to the nature and value of the phenomenon in question (as well as there are countless other circumstances, facts, possible outcomes, etc., one has to take into account). Later, in the framework of this openness, one can develop virtues required to achieve one's goals.

The radical character of world-openness can be observed on the communal level of life. Openness is also necessary in our moral life involving others, that is, community in a broader sense. If man is not open toward others and other (non-living) entities, then he senses nothing of the abundance of values of others and of other entities. If man is not unconditionally open to others, then he is unable to exert the most basic moral attitudes toward a wider community. For example, openness to the other, or openness for the other, for and to the beloved, is a fundamental element of love. In its communal aspect, in the case of love, the basic attitude of openness is the presupposition for every true love. In openness, guided by the attitude of love, we are able to see the real values of our beloved, as well as we are able to see her as a person in the full sense of the word. Again, openness is the framework, in which man is able to recognize his fellowman's inalienable dignity, individuality, unrepeatability, goodness and beauty. Openness is, however, not only the source of attitudes of moral character, which are responses to values of our fellowmen, but it is also the necessary attendant of the development of these attitudes.

An openness of the attitude of love is present when we are open to non-visible or hidden things or persons. A child, for example, can have many latent talents. Parents of the child, however, without openness to the possible talents of their kid, cannot love the child in the proper sense of the word. The same goes for other not-yet-evolved values of the child. Parents have to be open also toward all those values, which are not-yet-evolved: the value of the free decision of the child, the value of his or her own mature life, the preciousness of the child's thinking, etc. All these elements of true love flow from openness. Without being open to these possible values, the acts of love are meaningless, that is, the closed man can love neither himself, nor his fellowmen and community.⁶¹

As a final consequence we can say that wherever we look, we see and experience openness that can, in this dimension also be identified what others have called “reverence”, to be a fundamental element of moral life and recognition of values. Openness means, therefore, to be open to values. Consequently, man has capacity for values, that is, he is *capax virtutis*.

Divergent meanings show that the phenomenon of world-openness is not easily interpreted in a purely philosophical framework either. There is something unreal in world-openness which induces talk about an apparent world-openness. On the other hand, its reality cannot be denied, and so one tries to distinguish an everyday or restricted world-openness and a true world-openness having the full meaning of the phenomenon. The really striking fact about the world-openness is that it – like the phenomenon of the horizons of human cognition – recedes: it is always there, but requires huge efforts to grasp. Man's openness to the world is the multitude of possibilities of different actions, behaviors, wills, beliefs, attitudes, decisions and, at the same time, world-openness precedes all these actions, attitudes and constitutes their root.

⁶¹ The same was said by Plato in his dialogue *Gorgias*. According to Plato, when tyrants kill people or banish them or confiscate their property, think they are doing what is in their own best interest, but are actually pitiable. Socrates maintains that the wicked man is unhappy. (472e) In chapter 2.3. I'm going to give many examples for the communal character of openness.

Nevertheless, this character of world-openness shouldn't prevent us from the attempt of carrying out a real phenomenological analysis concentrating on the intelligible essence(s) of the phenomenon of world-openness. There are, however, phenomena which can be easily confused with world-openness. Moreover, there are many phenomena, which are apparently similar to the phenomenon of (world-)openness, but might constitute the clear antitheses of a genuine openness. Our task here, therefore, is to list all these phenomena, rightly characterize them, compare them with the phenomenon of world-openness itself, and finally clearly differentiate between that which is not the phenomenon we look for and that which it is. In the process I will also describe phenomena, which constitute obviously the antitheses and pseudo-forms of the phenomenon of world-openness. The investigation, therefore, sometimes has to apply pedantic distinctions and points, which apparently might not be to the point of our investigation. The preliminary understanding of world-openness, however, helps us to reduce these far-fetched meanings as well as helps to focus and delineate the phenomenon.

2.2. The Phenomenon of World-Openness in Max Scheler

“Every finite consciousness has of necessity a metaphysics
– insofar as it exists without God's factual self-disclosure.”

(Max Scheler 1954)

“Anthropology and ontology are [...] nothing but
two aspects of one and the same philosophical approach.”

(Emerich Coreth 1969)

The main task of the present chapter is to give a brief account on Max Scheler's view on the phenomenon of world-openness, since he was the first who applied the notion in the sense that we are trying to explicate. Besides therefore the exposition of Scheler's thought on world-openness, we will apply throughout the thesis his basic distinction between the animal world (*Umwelt*) and the world (*Welt*) of man.

The term world-openness constitutes an essential part of Scheler's anthropology. It is, however, highly questionable whether we can talk about coherent anthropologies, since, before the German 20th century anthropology, from Scheler, Gehlen and Plessner on, there was no anthropology in the modern sense of the word. This insight suggests that our epoch, on the one hand, really detects that man is exposed to a real danger (I think that the danger consists in inhumanity, that is, a total perversion of man's original, ineffable essence), and on the other hand, can in fact be considered as a real epoch of anthropology. This insight, however, concerning man's place in the world has to be understood as a good consequence of something negative, since it rather indicates man's unbalanced and distorted role in the world, which originally belongs to him. Following this train of thought, it is also questionable whether we can talk about structuralist anthropology or anthropology in structuralism, since its representatives in the fifties talked about the “death of man”. For example, according to Michel Foucault, man had been only a temporary target of sciences and will disappear with the emergence of structuralism. According to another structuralist, Claude Lévi-Strauss, sciences can only explicate man's structures, since being a complex structure, he is timeless and unconscious. In the same way it is also problematic whether there are postmodern anthropologies at all, since – as for example Lyotard claimed – neither the ego nor the subject

has unity, in short, as a matter of fact, they do not even exist. According to the proponents of Marxist ideology, there is strict determinism in the world that leaves no room for freedom. In this deterministic-mechanistic materialist view, the role of the subject (and of subjectivity) is minimized and the notion of man is distorted. In short, some 20th anthropologies questioned the integrity of man, subject and person (or however we call the great “mystery” of the world).

Following the classical insights of philosophy there is, however, another viewpoint that has been articulated in contrast to the anti- and non-anthropology of anthropologies of closedness. For a vast number of thinkers the “discovery and turn to subjectivity”⁶² became a genuine philosophical topic. These thinkers of the anthropological awakening did philosophy in terms of anthropology.

Max Scheler is one of the leading figures of the anthropological renaissance. His interpreters all agree that one of his main concerns was anthropology.⁶³ Scheler’s main project was to explore the basic structure of human nature. In his latest and because of many final points controversial book devoted to philosophical anthropology, “*Man’s Place in Nature*” he claims that a primary task of a philosophical anthropology is to

“show in detail how all the specific achievement and works of man – language, conscience, tools, weapons, ideas of right and wrong, the state, leadership, the representational function of art, myths, religion, science, history and social life – arise from the basic structure of the human nature.”⁶⁴

Scheler, starting from the “basic structure of human nature” discovered that man is in search of infinity.⁶⁵ The search leads man to an ineffable numinous experience of an ultimate

⁶² See Crosby, John F., *The Philosophical Achievement of Dietrich von Hildebrand. Concluding Reflections on the Symposium. Aletheia An International Yearbook of Philosophy* (5.) 1992: 321.

⁶³ As for example Herbert Spiegelberg, who was among the firsts, who did justice to Max Scheler's anthropology saying that “ethics and philosophical anthropology were the persistent central concerns of Scheler's philosophy.” In Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1982, ff. 273.

⁶⁴ Max Scheler, *Man’s Place in Nature*, New York: The Noonday Press, 1979: 88.

⁶⁵ Moreover, Scheler says that the sense of infinity is before every experience or assertion about the world and the self: “Hence, it is a complete mistake to assert that I exist (as in Descartes) or that there is a world (as in

Personality, appropriately described as *ens a se*, a being from and through itself. Now, in the course of the search man discovers that he is nothing at all (he discovers his Nothingness, *Nichtigkeit*) as he is confronted with the source of his being. This is the feeling, which in itself is a religious feeling or act as such (and as a matter of fact it is also a response to the numinous experience); it is that which Scheler calls a feeling of infinite dependence, or in other words, the experience of his condition as a being which is caused by another, obviously of a higher power (*Gewirktheitserlebnis*). According to Scheler, man is supposed to answer to this feeling: either he gives an adequate answer, i.e., man identifies the object or the being on which he depends in a radical way with God, or, man can suppress the feeling of the transcendent and fill it with earthly and finite goods, as he says, using a religious phrasing, “idols”. In the light of his view on man’s relation to an absolute sphere, we can now understand his claim that “every finite spirit believes either in God or in an idol”.⁶⁶ In another place he adds: “Man is therefore, necessarily a metaphysician – insofar as he does not believe in the reality of God or believes in the reality of God.”⁶⁷ Now, paraphrasing Tertullian’s saying and applying it to Scheler, we can conclude that man possesses *anima naturaliter metaphysica*. It means that man is in an outstanding position possessing, on the one hand, an incomparable access to reality and, on the other, an ability to express adequately the object of his orientation. For Scheler it also means that independently of whether one has had a philosophical training or not, one is able to reach a point where the totality of being is offered to oneself.

In whatever form we talk about man, we have to get one point straight, namely the fact that man is “interesting” (which means man is worth being discussed about) for scientific

St. Thomas Aquinas) before asserting the general proposition that there is an absolute Being – in other words, to derive the sphere of absolute Being from the other modes of being.” Max Scheler, *Man’s Place in Nature*, New York: The Noonday Press, 1979: 90.

⁶⁶ “Jeder endliche Geist glaubt entweder an Gott oder an einen Götzen.” Max Scheler, *Vom Ewigen im Menschen*. Bern: Francke Verlag, 1954: 261.

⁶⁷ Scheler 1957: 207.

research and man has a special place among the entities (possible philosophical objects) of the world. According to Scheler, man has an exceptional position; he is not like “a coat hanging in a cupboard” – as Heidegger would say. As a matter of fact, in comparison to other beings, man is the only one who wants to do good, wants to know the truth, deals with the questions of the world, wants to enjoy beauty, deeply investigates the reasons of the world and at the same time is fully aware of his freedom and who constantly wants to uncover the underlying reasons of all domains. According to Scheler, every understanding of man involves an inseparable self-understanding of being rooted in history, since every philosophical speculation according to its own depth includes a fundamental decision (*Grundbestimmung*) on the nature of man. Philosophies, however, are not important or unimportant depending on whether they take explicitly this fundamental decision or not. Now, concordant with Scheler's thoughts on man, I claim that all philosophical (and theological) anthropologies as well as different disciplines of philosophy are false if they do not, in some fashion, include anthropology in their starting point. I consider therefore every philosophy as implying a certain anthropology even if the philosophy in question apparently doesn't have anthropologically relevant features or says little or nothing on anthropological issues. The question of the phenomenon of man is, however, in one or another form, inevitably a main concern of all philosophies independently of the type of the philosophy. And since it is always the philosopher who is asking, above all his personal existence is questioned.⁶⁸ Philosophy, philosophizing, while not always being about us, human beings, being able to deal with space and time, inanimate matter, plants, the cosmos, God, being as such, logical laws, etc., is executed only by us, human beings. However, many other philosophies have an explicitly marked anthropological interest or even a primary focus and interest in the human person. This can be said about Scheler: his whole oeuvre can be conceived as a philosophical inquiry

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Cf. the famous Horatio citation: “*Tua res agitur*”, that is, „it concerns always you.”

about man as focal point. There are three senses in which we can understand Scheler's remark that every philosophy is anthropology. In the first sense it means an anthropologically defined thinking; it means a philosophy pervaded by deep anthropological interest. This is not found in *all* philosophies. In the second sense we say that all philosophies are anthropology insofar as they take the phenomenon of human being as their starting point.⁶⁹ In the third sense, however, we say that every philosophy is anthropology referring to the fact that, since every philosophizing being known to us is human, every scientific approach implicitly entails a fundamental position on the philosophizing subject as well as on the nature of man. It means that it includes a philosophical approach (how one philosophizes; how fundamental one's philosophy is; what the aims of one's philosophy are; what does philosophy concerning one's life mean, etc.) and a philosophical judgment about man's nature and vocation.

In respect of Scheler's views on man's world-openness there is one further issue, which we have to discuss briefly. In Scheler's philosophy "proofs" (*Beweis*) play no role in – what we traditionally call the proofs for the existence of God.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, a demonstration (*Aufweis*) or a non-deductive verification (*Nachweis*)⁷¹ of the existence of God we might reconstruct as the following: man's consciousness possesses a necessary relation to an absolute sphere, in the same sense as "world" and "ego" are given immediately in human of consciousness, and God's existence is, therefore, not just indirectly derivable through proofs.⁷² Besides thus asserting a necessary relation of human consciousness to God (the

⁶⁹ In this sense a theological anthropology or a metaphysical tractate of God can also be anthropological.

⁷⁰ See: "to find God is something different from proving his existence" Max Scheler, *On the Eternal in Man*. Hamden: Archon Books, 1972: 254.

⁷¹ This is a term hard to be translated. Frings translates it as rediscovery. He, however, remarks that this is not a good translation. *Nachweis* is certainly another way for proof (perhaps understood in a less logical-formal sense) the existence of God.

⁷² For Scheler there was a difference between an argument or proof (*Beweis*) and pointing out or demonstration (*Aufweis*). In order to understand Scheler's account on proving the existence of the Supreme Being in a different way, we have to follow his essential distinction between different kinds of 'proofs': 1. proof (*Beweis*) ; 2. demonstration (*Aufweis*); 3. *Nachweis* (no adequate English word for this; the best translation that I can propose is 'non-deductive verification'). In short, according to Scheler, the way we can tell something about God's nature and existence is the demonstration (*Aufweis*) and non-deductive verification (*Nachweis*), since the religious

absolute being), which is the basis of the religious act, Scheler – even though he denies the ontological argument as invalid – assumes a very similar direct evident knowledge of the existence of God, which he even calls the “zweitevidente Einsicht”, the second most evident knowledge (after the insight that there is something rather than nothing): that God (an absolute being) exists.⁷³ Namely, man’s consciousness and the absolute sphere are amalgamated,⁷⁴ which means in other words, that man has a unique access to the fullness of reality, and consequently, also to the absolute sphere of the Supreme Being.⁷⁵ In this train of thought we again encounter the ancient problem of the possibility of cognition of God. According to the classical understandings, there exists a gap between man and the divine sphere. Now, according to Max Scheler, this gap can be bridged and God does not reign in the distance beyond man's reach. The expression of “man is necessarily a metaphysician” clearly states that man is essentially capable of transcending himself. Man is not only a “finely composed machine” being imprisoned in his own physical and material cage of determinism. Similarly, since man can recognize his broken nature and nothingness, and has also the capacity and the passion to always become more, man is not the protagonist of the eternal drama of the failures of his transcendental goals; consequently he is not a “useless passion”. Scheler acknowledged the real existence of the gap between man and God (this is the reason why we cannot charge the early Scheler with pantheism even if he talks about the “deification” of man⁷⁶), but firmly had stated the need of conceiving God, calling this

sphere as *Urgegebenes* (archphenomenon) belongs to the not-provable things, namely they (as the “we”, the “ego”, the “existence” and the “world”) are primordial phenomena.

⁷³ See Josef Seifert, “Schelers Denken des absoluten Ursprungs: Zum Verhältnis von Schelers Metaphysik und Religionsphilosophie zum ontologischen Gottesbeweis”, in: Christian Bernes, Wolfhart Henckmann, Heinz Leonardy und Thüringische Gesellschaft für Philosophie, Jena (Hg.), *Denken des Ursprungs – Ursprung des Denkens. Schelers Philosophie und ihre Anfänge in Jena. Kritisches Jahrbuch der Philosophie* 3 (1998), pp. 34-53.

⁷⁴ In the sense of a unity as, let’s say, flesh and bones are inseparable in human body.

⁷⁵ Here we cannot go into the details of Scheler’s philosophy of religion. I think, however, that a very careful critical investigation would needed to avoid Scheler’s pantheistic later philosophy of man’s relation to God.

⁷⁶ Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1982: 299. (This is no longer the case with the later Scheler. I think that he tended very much to a profound metaphysical confusion in his „Man’s Place in Nature” and also to some type of pantheism and

knowledge an “essential insight” (*Wesenseinsicht*).⁷⁷ But even if we fill this gap (the gap between the absolute sphere and us), we don’t know much about his essence. According to Scheler there is a second step which has to be taken and this is the phenomenological analysis of religious acts, in which one has to show why religious acts are in an outstanding position in comparison with all other acts. Now, this second step is the second feature of – the early – Scheler’s philosophy of religion:⁷⁸ the phenomenology of religious acts.

There are a number of religious acts such as prayer, a certain kind of religious fear, acts of thanking God, awe, etc. The common feature of these religious acts is that, on the one hand, by their essence they cannot be fulfilled by any finite, worldly objects of experience (in another formulation these finite and worldly objects, if they take the place of God, are idols), on the other hand, they are naturally rooted in the very nature of human being. Both characteristics point to transcending man. That is why Scheler presents the phenomenology of religious acts. A religious act transcends all worldly objects, namely its aim is not non-worldly, but rather other-worldly. According to Scheler, one of the most basic experiences of the believer is that the fulfillment of the expectation of the religious feeling can be fulfilled only by God. There is no other person or object, which could fulfill the expectation or intention of the religious act of the believer. The impossibility of the fulfillment of religious acts by finite beings lies, for Scheler, in the very existence of reality itself, i.e., in its thisness (*Sosein*). But a genuine religious act is always directed – using Rudolf Otto’s famous formulation – to the “totally different” (*das ganz anderes*).

I have said at the beginning of this chapter that the term world-openness constitutes an essential part of Scheler’s anthropology, even so, little has been said about world-openness

even to a kind of atheism in the sense that God was conceived by him as the most powerless and weak idea instead of the most real being and creator of the world.)

⁷⁷ Max Scheler, *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und materiale Wertethik*. GW 2. p. 407.

⁷⁸ I use the term philosophy of religion in the case of Scheler in a wide sense, since he explicitly rejected any kind of philosophy of God. According to Scheler, philosophy should deal only with religion itself by the help of a phenomenological analysis of religious experience. See Frings Manfred S. Frings, *The Mind of Max Scheler. The First Comprehensive Guide Based on the Complete Work*. Milwaukee, Marquette University Press: 2001: 121.

itself. On the other hand, constantly, however latently, we have been talking about world-openness, since in the background of all our statements on Scheler's views on the nature of religion, proofs for the existence of God, phenomenology of religious acts, etc., there was the presupposition of man's openness to the world. Behind the recognition of man's nothingness (*Nichtigkeit*), for example, there is the philosophical insight of the world-open man, who can acknowledge his nothingness precisely in his openness facing the world. If there is not the philosophical prerequisite of openness, then there is no recognition and acceptance of the *conditio humana*. The recognition of the other, of the world, of man's unique position can never be articulated and understood without the preceding presupposition of the phenomenon of world-openness.

The same goes for the Schelerian “demonstrations” for the existence of God. If we do not suppose a prior real openness on the part of man, and would it not have an adequate direction, we would not be able to attain to such knowledge of God. Denying the essential openness of man and the necessary relation of his consciousness to an absolute sphere, we could not point to a supreme being outside us. The Schelerian “proofs” for the existence of God presuppose that the world-open man is open to a full meaning providing reality, which, in fact, is an adequate “answer” to his acts. We can conceive Scheler's “proofs” as new formulations of Descartes' proofs for the existence of God from the idea of God (direction of the “movement”), that can be explained only by a really existing God (object).⁷⁹

Scheler developed an original thought on the God-directedness of the human being. In his understanding “every finite spirit (*Geist*) believes either in God or an idol.”⁸⁰ What does that mean? First of all it means that man (the finite spirit) has essentially a structure, which, consciously or unconsciously, directs him in all of his moments of life, or, in other words,

⁷⁹ As for example does Spiegelberger. He conceives Scheler's proof as an “*Aufweis*, a pointing out of what everyone can discover directly by following the direction of the pointer.” See: Herbert Spiegelberger, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1982: 299.

⁸⁰ Max Scheler, *On the Eternal in Man*, Hamden: Archon Books, 1972: 261.

man is bestowed with the peculiarity of being directed outward to an object, which might explain man's own existence in the most comprehensive sense. Again, without the presupposition of man's original openness Scheler's groundbreaking idea would not have a solid foundation. On the other hand, however, as William Petropulos says, we cannot specify religious acts as the only "exits" to the world and to God (in other words, the phenomenology of religious acts is not the only way for "demonstrating" God's existence; there are many other ways as we shall see it in the next chapters of the thesis), since man does not perform always and exclusively religious acts. "Since the religious act is an essential endowment of the human mind, it is not a question of whether an individual performs it. It is only a question of whether the act finds its adequate »object«"⁸¹ Being directed toward God has to be taken as an ontological status and does not mean a continuous realization only through religious acts. In this sense we can also understand Scheler's idea of man's openness to God without the exact definition of the object of this openness, that is, as "simple" openness.

In Scheler it seems, however, that man's structural (god-)openness can have two objects: God or substitutions of whatever kind for God, that is, idols. It seems also that there are two directions and two objects. Both object-directed movements have their point of departure in man's openness, but they can point to different objects. Even if being open to the world is a necessary constituent of human being, – following Scheler – as bottom-line we can say, based on our everyday observations, that man has the character of being directed towards transcendence.⁸² This is, in my understanding, the "neutral" nomination for man's openness. It is neutral in the sense that it does not contain yet the element of the divine reality. Nevertheless, the interpretation of world-openness as God-directedness requires, I think, one further (in my view fully justified) step.

⁸¹ William Petropulos, *Scheler and Voegelin*. In: Stephen Schneck (ed.), *Max Scheler's Acting Persons. New Perspectives*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002: 115.

⁸² Scheler doesn't use either of the words. It is my interpretation. Although, he could have used it, e.g. in his anthropology, when he is talking about man as God-seeker (*Gottsucher*).

This law stands: every finite spirit believes either in God or in idols. And from it there follows this pedagogic rule of religion: the correct way of dispelling 'unbelief' is not that of guiding man to the idea and reality of God by arguments external to his personal condition (whether by 'proofs' or by persuasion), but that by showing him [...] that he has installed a finite good in place of God, i.e. that within the objective sphere of the absolute, which he 'has' at all events as a sphere, he has, in our sense, 'deified' a particular good [...] In thus bringing a man to disillusion with his idol [...] we bring him *of his own accord* to the idea of the reality of God. Hence, what I have called the 'shattering of idols' is the principal (and only) way to prepare the religious development of the personality.⁸³

For Scheler – as the quotation above shows – man's openness can or cannot succeed in attaining its proper object. Independently of the object and the success of reaching its object, openness, however, still remains the same and does not undergo a change. A phenomenon such as a preventive war, for example, can be considered preventive insofar as it does not overstep the objective lines of a preventive war. If it obviously targets civilians, attacks without any sign of hostility on the part of other nations, acts without the permission or consent of international organizations, then it is an offensive action. In other words, if it fails its object, it cannot be considered a preventive war anymore.

Also consider, for example, what happens when someone puts a certain herb into a meal which unwittingly causes serious health problems to another person; the object of his cooking, namely to please the other, has failed. Nevertheless, due to the fact that the object of his goodwill has not failed (since other state of affairs can prove his original goodwill), he will be charged with the unintended infliction of pain and suffering. Yet, the object of the cooking has failed. If I might put in this way, the aim of his action is missing; there is no pleasing, instead there is pain. This is again an example of the disappearance of the phenomenon after the failure of its object.

On the other hand, the phenomenon of world-openness does not terminate even if intended toward valueless, meaningless or fool's gold (*Talmi*) entities. According to Scheler,

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Max Scheler, *On the Eternal in Man*, Hamden: Archon Books, 1972: 267-268.

the real object of man's openness and direction is God, therefore whatever is in the place of God, he reckons it as "idol". Idols, in the place of God, might be also objects of man's openness, but are improper objects. On the one hand, man has the capacity to abuse his openness; on the other hand, the capacity of openness precisely enables him to overcome this abuse. The "shattering of idols" is therefore not a mission impossible, but requires the huge effort of the phenomenological – as Patocka says following the Platonic tradition – "care [or guidance] of the soul".

The Schelerian idea of the world-openness of man opens up enormous new vistas. Let me mention just one example. In the contemporary discussions of interreligious dialogue (and in ecumenism too) it has become of utmost importance to find a common ground, a foundation for dialogue. Now, Scheler's views on man's openness to the world can provide a real foundation for interreligious dialogue, since the main thesis of his anthropology may receive a theistic interpretation (which was also Scheler's authentic idea), which says, that since all men are open to the ultimate reality, all men are in salvific relation⁸⁴ to God.⁸⁵ The first half of the sentence can be considered as the philosophical point of origin (of an interreligious dialogue), whereas the second half of the sentence is the theological and interreligious result of the philosophical one. Moreover, since the image of the world-open man comes from a philosophical observation, we can say that philosophy can frame the furtherance of dialogue. In other words, the "grammar" of interreligious dialogue can be philosophical.

For Scheler, man is an ultimate givenness (*Gegebenheit*). Man utterly differs from animals, his principles of life cannot be reduced to any functions or determinants of his surroundings, which means, that he can have a command over his instincts, and on the other

⁸⁴ Scheler doesn't use this term. In my understanding „salvific relation" means that all men, independently of their religious convictions, are in an intimate connection with God. Because of their metaphysical constitution all men can be saved. This tie, between God and man, signifies the potentiality of being saved – and not its actual status.

⁸⁵ From this, however, does not follow that they are all saved.

hand, that he can command himself by intellect arising from his personality. Man's principal characteristic – which also comes from his intelligence – is the capacity to question. He says:

Again, we can define intelligent behavior without reference to psychic processes. An organism behaves intelligently when it satisfies the following conditions: It must be capable of responding, without trial and error, to a new situation meaningfully, cleverly or foolishly; that is, aiming at a goal but missing it, for only one who is intelligent can be foolish. Moreover, independently of the number of trial runs, an intelligent organism must be able to overcome the task defined by his instincts. [...] This intelligence, however, in case of man, can serve peculiar spiritual aims.⁸⁶

Scheler was particularly interested in the problem of hominization raising the question of man's specific place and role. He says that the essence of man is his “exceptional place”, which is above that which we call intellect or the capacity of making decisions. Man's “exceptional place” does not depend on stages, there is not a quantitative difference between man and other organisms. Scheler claims that it would be also erroneous to say that what makes man a man is an additional new stage of extant vital and psychic functions (such as power of feeling, instinct, associative memory, intelligence), which can be the subject of psychology as well as biology.

This new principle transcends all what we call »life« in the most general sense. It is not a stage of life especially not a stage of the particular mode of life we call psyche, but a principle opposed to life as such, even to life in man. Thus, it is a genuinely new phenomenon which cannot be derived from the natural evolution of life, but which, if reducible to anything, leads back to the ultimate Ground of Being of which »life« is a particular manifestation.⁸⁷

Scheler found a comprehensive notion for the principle of life of man, which can express man's capacity to grasp arch-phenomena, essences as well as a “multiplicity of emotional and volitional acts”. This notion is “spirit” (*Geist*) and the “act-center”, in which the spirit manifests itself within the finite spheres of being, is called “person”.⁸⁸ For Scheler, man's

⁸⁶ Max Scheler, *Man's Place in Nature*, New York: The Noonday Press, 1979: 29.

⁸⁷ Max Scheler, *op.cit.* 33.

⁸⁸ The idea that the person is just an act-center in Scheler's sense and not a substantial being according to many thinkers is a dangerous error. Among others it was Josef Seifert who tried to unfold this critique in several places, including in his *Leib und Seele. Ein Beitrag zur philosophischen Anthropologie* (Salzburg: A. Pustet,

most important characteristic is being open to the world (*Weltoffenheit*). “Man is an X that can behave in a world-open manner to an unlimited extent. Becoming to man is rising by force of spirit towards opening to the world.”⁸⁹ This distinction says that man in comparison to animals can free himself from his surroundings, man can form his surroundings, that is, man has a world (*Welt*), whereas animals have surroundings (*Umwelt*). Disengaged from natural surroundings, man became a “world-open” being. All this constitutes preparedness for something, the creation of the possibility “for something which can happen only to man”. Contrary to an animal – as Scheler says –, man is transcendence, man is in becoming. This also means that an animal neither can objectify the world nor question, man, on the contrary, continually questions. Man has and is freedom, whereas an animal has a “scheme of life”.

There are a lot of peculiarities arising from man's structure of existence. Scheler lists them as follows: 1. Only man possesses a developed thing and substance category. 2. Man has his own space. 3. Man possesses a concept of space and time prior to all sense experiences. 4. While an animal has “surroundings-space”, man has “world-space”. 5. Only man is able to transcend everything as well as himself. 6. Man has also the capacity of ideation. Ideation means the suspension of the reality of things involved in the grasping of the essences of things.

Starting from the phenomenon of man's openness, Scheler was able to develop a new, dynamic notion of man, whose essence is grasped in his acts, which integrated the traditional scholastic, static notion of the person. In his view, the spirit is pure activity, while the center of the spirit, i.e., the “person” is a continuously self-realizing act-structure.⁹⁰ Scheler says that

1973), *Das Leib-Seele Problem und die gegenwärtige philosophische Diskussion. Eine kritisch-systematische Analyse* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 21989)

⁸⁹ Max Scheler, *op.cit.* 49.

⁹⁰ I think that with this Scheler did not want to say that there are “less” (like babies), and “more developed” (like adults) human beings. He did not want to defend abortion for instance. With this rather strange expression he wanted to point out how the “hidden” aspect of man, the personality maintains its connection with the world and others, and how it manifests itself.

the sphere of the person exists only in pursuance and execution of his acts.⁹¹ For Scheler, man is in continuous contact with the world through his acts. His familiar relation to and with the world shows that, as a matter of fact, man is at home in the world; he has essentially to do with the world. Being open to the world in this context means having the capacity and ability “to arrive home”, even if man says sometimes no to life. From the fact of the freedom of world-openness comes the fact that man can say no to life and the world, or can negate the truth of his world-openness. The apriori endowment of openness, however, independently of the statement and view of the individual, still makes possible the absolute negation (which is in this sense erroneous) of the world, life, openness, and the like.

Scheler rightly observed the religious aspect of the phenomenon of the excentric status of man. World-openness is, however, the basic phenomenon, which gains its full meaning in the religious context. He also had to answer the question of the ultimate object of openness. His question is: what is supposed to be open to man's openness? The discovery of this excentric core in man does not manifest itself exclusively in metaphysics, but means that man's original orientation is not worldly, but other-worldly.

Precisely in the very moment when the world-open being and the never-ending striving had come into being in order to penetrate into the endless world-sphere and not to stop at particularities [...] in this very same moment man needed to anchor his center outside and beyond the world.⁹²

Scheler gives basically a religious interpretation to the phenomenon of world-openness. No matter how (or how not) one fills out the region of openness, one can never be in doubt that it is constituent of every finite being, because it is simply “is there” (*dass sie bestehe*).⁹³

⁹¹ See: Max Scheler, *op.cit.* 56.

⁹² Max Scheler, *Man's Place in Nature*, New York: The Noonday Press, 1979: 108-109.

⁹³ See: Max Scheler, *Absolutsphäre – «Metaphysischer Hang» – Metaphysik des Absoluten – und der Glaube an eine Selbstmitteilungen Gottes*. In: Max Scheler, *Schriften aus dem Nachlass*. (Maria Scheler ed.) Bern: Francke Verlag, (Gesammelte Werke) Vol. X: 201.

2.3. Aspects in the Person that can be open: Intellect, Will, Heart, Attitudes, Faith

“Fecisti nos ad te Domine, inquietum est cor nostrum
donec requiescat in te.”
(Saint Augustine, Confessions)

So far, in the preceding chapters, we have been talking about man and openness in general terms. The topic is in need, however, of further elaboration. In the present chapter, the scope of the investigation turns to the subjective side. It will concentrate on another aspect of the problem. Presupposing that world-openness is a phenomenon, which in one important sense of the term is an attitude or an element thereof, we also have to suppose that there are different aspects and forms of the same phenomenon. The phenomenon of world-openness manifests itself in different acts and attitudes of the human being, that is man can behave world-open manner in his acts. In this sense we can speak about the openness of different human acts, such as the openness of the heart, the openness of the will, the openness of the intellect, the openness of the faith. In the following we shall be investigating all those acts and attitudes, in which human being's openness can be detected. I shall refer to these acts and attitudes as aspects, that is, supposing that they are aspects of the very same phenomenon that the person can take an attitude of openness, can open herself. Our question is in this section is: How can the intellect, the will, the heart, and other attitudes open to something and what are the right objects of these opennesses? It should also be asked whether there are specific values in the objects of openness, or whether openness does not presuppose its objects as values. In other words, what (what value) makes an object a real one? Does the justification of a certain type of openness in man depend on the authenticity of its object? In this section we base our investigations on previous insights on world-openness, that is, the bearer of openness can be only a personal being, man.

Openness of the intellect

The openness of the intellect is a vast topic. In this section, we shall examine a higher-rank faculty of man, which, in contrast to the will (highest appetitive faculty in man), is called cognitive or knowing faculty. Our investigations on the phenomenon of the will in the next section will sufficiently explain the fundamental function of knowledge or cognition with regard to willing. Here let me mention just one essential point concerning the relation of the will and the intellect: will is a *desideratum* born of intellectual knowledge, whereas cognition precedes any act of the will; as the Scholastic dictum says: *nihil volitum nisi praecogitum*. In general, we refer to thinking and cognitional actions (power for knowing things, power of judging, reason, intelligence, understanding, power of remembering, recalling, power of recognizing the agreement or disagreement of human conduct with the rule of what such conduct ought to be, etc., etc.) of the human mind as intellect. As a matter of fact, however, intellect is the faculty of grasping the truth. Even if intellect starts its investigation usually with contingent facts and entities, its highest object is truth. Therefore we can say that the intellect tries to grasp not only the truth of things (nor truth(s) of the thoughts), but truth itself. What I mean by the distinction between truth of the things and truth itself can be best explained by an analogy taken from Plato. Plato in his dialogue the Eutyphro wants to know the notion of holiness (or, according to other translations, piety). Socrates asks:

Is not holiness always the same with itself in every action, and, on the other hand, is not unholiness the opposite of all holiness, always the same with itself and whatever is to be unholy possessing some one characteristic quality? (Eutyphro 5d)

[...]

Now call to mind that this is not what I asked you, to tell me one or two of the many holy acts, but to tell the essential aspect, by which all holy are holy; for you said that all unholy acts were unholy and all holy ones holy by one aspect. (Eutyphro 6d)

Now, the same goes for truth. There are the truths of the things, which are objects of the human intellect, but at the same time, through the truths of these things, the intellect wants (and is able to know) to know truth itself, by which all truths are truth.

It seems that among the faculties of man, the intellect is open to the world in the most manifest way, since intellect by its definition has to do with the world. One could say that we are open to the world in every act of the intellect. Now, whether this claim is true, the following investigation, phenomenological analysis is supposed to answer. This analysis, however, because of the immense dimensions of the topic of the intellect, should be taken only as an attempt to show the essential connection between openness and intellect.

Even the general and everyday meaning of the intellect suggests that it has to do with something that is outside the knower and that reaches out towards objects. Modern authors call the intellect 'mind', I think, however, that intellect and mind are synonymous and can refer to various manifestations of the same phenomenon. I mean by that that intellect can have various forms of function. When, for example, the intellect functions in a discursive manner, we call it reason. Inasmuch as the intellect immediately (*auf einem Schlag*) recognizes eternal truths, such as the value of love, it is called intelligence. Besides this, there are instances when the intellect refers to the self and to inner mental and bodily activities. In this case however intellect is called consciousness. Moreover, the intellect can refer to moral implications of a situation and of man's partaking in them. In this case intellect is called conscience. The intellect can retain knowledge concerning the past. In this sense, intellect is called memory. These all are instances, in which the intellect refers to something that is unlike itself. Now, referring to something is again a certain type of openness.

There is another preliminary understanding concerning the openness of the intellect, according to which we say, that, since we usually refer to intellect as an access to the totality of entities and principles, intellect is the only vehicle to have an authentic connection with the world. Having an authentic connection with the world means rejecting, on the one hand, subjective idealism, which says that nothing exists except the mind and its perceptions, where material things (everything outside the mind) are mere perceptions, and, on the other hand,

naturalistic materialism, which says that the only thing that exists is matter. Materialism indeed pays attention to things and the world but fails to recognize that things are not only material compositions and phenomena are not only the results of material interactions. Between these extremes the idea of authentic connection with the world of realist phenomenology can be thematized. Realist phenomenology, based on its insights into the nature of the intellect, was able to develop an original view of knowing and having a real connection with things. Rocco Buttiglione writes:

The discovery of intentionality, then, which stands as the ground of phenomenology in the Logical Investigations is the discovery of the reaching out of consciousness towards objects. [See especially the Fifth Logical Investigation.] On the other hand, knowing does not consist in the subject's pure and intentional reaching toward an object; knowing something is always also a self-giving of the object within the subject's reaching. This is why phenomenology wanted to be a return to the things themselves.⁹⁴

The maxim of phenomenology, “back to the things themselves”, means therefore an authentic connection with the world. Phenomenology is interested in the things of the world as they are given to us in experiences. In this sense phenomenology is indeed a “genuine positivism”,⁹⁵ as Max Scheler says or a real “empiricism of essences” as Josef Seifert stresses referring to Dietrich von Hildebrand's account on the method of phenomenology.⁹⁶ This also means that, according to phenomenology, the knowing faculty of man is not imprisoned in the cages of the self and his self-generated ideas, neither in any reductionist view on the outer world. The intellect freely and in an unbiased manner is disposed to be open to the world, and at the same time, it examines the world as it is.

⁹⁴ Rocco Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyła. The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*. Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997: 273.

⁹⁵ See Max Scheler, “Phenomenology and the Theory of Cognition” in: Max Scheler, *Selected Philosophical Essays*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973. p. 138: “The 'ray' of reflection should try to touch only what is 'there' in the closest and most living contact and only so far as it is there. In this sense, but only in this, phenomenological philosophy is the most radical *empiricism* and positivism.”

⁹⁶ See Josef Seifert, *Editor's Introductory Essay*. In: Dietrich von Hildebrand, *What is Philosophy?* London and New York: Routledge 1991. pp. XLI-LVI.

One of the main characteristics of the knowing faculty of man is that it is not essentially exercised by the use of any organs. Bodily organs, however, can be considered as the first step of the real function of the intellect. Bodily organs are “first steps” in the sense that man perceives and recognizes the world intelligently through the senses in a specifically human way. This does not mean that cognition would be equal to the activity of any organic faculty or of the brain, or even to the immaterial conscious sense perception as such. For example, in observing the yearly apparent movement of the Sun, I can recognize the principles of the movement and based on these observations I can produce a solar calendar. The first step of producing a calendar can be considered as an act that occurs through the use of a bodily organ, seeing, hearing, etc.; the second step, however, never. By the help of the activity of bodily organs, such as the faculty of sight of the eye, we will never be able to produce calendars of any kind, since sense perceptions per se, if not informed by the intellectual knowledge, as they always are in the specifically human sense perception, are lacking the essential characteristics, such as grasping abstract essences and knowing the universal in intellectual cognition. With the help of my sight or hearing, not even adding all my organic faculties, I can never draw consequences concerning principles, ideas, abstract entities, etc. Finally, we can draw the conclusion concerning the attribute of the intellect: since the intellect can exercise the activity of knowing in a manner wholly impossible to any organic faculty, on the one hand, we can say that it transcends all other bodily faculties, and on the other, we can call it a supra-organic faculty. In this sense, man's knowing faculty, since it transcends organic faculties in comparison to these faculties, can be viewed as a more open faculty.

There is another way of proving the unique openness of the intellect. The localization of thinking has been a central issue for philosophers of the mind. However, if we take the example of a person in the persistent vegetative state or in the locked-in syndrome, along the

same lines with the preceding train of thought, we would say that the human being in the “persistent vegetative state” (PVS) is not a person and does not possess human dignity at all. This localization of human dignity is, however, erroneous, and, above all, illicitly identifies simple bodily functions with higher spiritual categories. A PVS patient, even if he gives no signs of intellectual life of any kind, even if he is bed-ridden from birth, is still a human being endowed with human dignity in the full sense of the word. As life and human dignity is more than the accumulation of bodily functions, so is the intellect more than any organic activity of the brain or even than the performance of intellectual acts. In this sense, however, we again encounter a new aspect of openness of the intellect, namely, that the intellect is not bound to a sense-organ and even less can be reduced to any of the functions of a sense-organs; compared to sense perception or certain more limited motoric and other abilities the intellect, despite its manifold dependence on brain function, is not even bound to a specific region of the brain and most certainly differs in its essence so much from the brain that it cannot in any way be reduced to the brain. Since it is not bound to any of the functions of the brain, it also transcends them and is open to a wider range of reality.

From another point of view, one can also observe the openness of the intellect. From the point of view of the object of intellect and senses this difference is more manifest. The object of the senses is only one particular part of the totality. With my eyes I see what can be seen and with my ears I hear what can be heard, etc., etc. As a matter of fact, none of the senses can substitute (nor contribute to) another sense. Similarly, senses cannot substitute the function of the intellect, because they grasp only a limited range of reality. For example, sitting in a theatre, I am able to visually concentrate on the stage. Doing this I will see what is occurring on the stage. The minute I want to see the top box and I avert my eyes, I don't know what is taking place on the stage. Even if I hear the dialogue (which act seems to be a substitution of sight), it is still one object that I hear, and another distinct object that I see. It

seems to be trivial to say, that I cannot observe and see at the same time two different kinds of things as objects. Nevertheless, if we relate it to the problem of openness, it is more illuminating. The objects of the senses are always single; they cannot, by their definition, grasp a multiplicity of things, or the totality of the world. One could object that the experience of hearing can come from different sources. That's true; noise, for example, comes from thousands of sources. It does not mean, however, that it would be the abstracted experience of thousands of objects. Noise in itself is indeed a single, particular object for hearing, even if later one can distinguish different sources of the noise. This latter step, however, is not the function of the faculty of hearing. This further analyzing step is the intellect. Senses are therefore also open to the world, although in the mode of their capacity and are open only to parts of the world that present themselves to a particular sense, and even the sense of sight that has the widest range and possesses a somewhat infinite horizon or ocean or sly, is still infinitely limited when compared to the entire universe that lies beyond its reach. The reality that they grasp can be only one part of the whole reality. Consequently, senses are directed to limited objects, whereas intellect is open to the totality of the world.

We can ask, whether there is another way to proceed, whether there is another way to approach the problem of the object of the openness of the intellect? My answer is that, if we start our investigations from our everyday experience and we broaden the notion of intellect, I think there is. In the following few paragraphs we will proceed by substituting the notion of intellect with the notion of cognition. We can reformulate our initial question concerning the object of the intellect: what is the object of cognition? This substitution, however, is not an illicit one; since the intellect's eminent act is cognition, and to a certain extent, other acts of the intellect, such as judging, recalling, or awaking one's conscience depend on cognition.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ The classification of human faculties is again a classical problem of philosophy. Here we cannot go into detail; nevertheless I think that considering these faculties from an underlying a priori, but implicit object of the intellectual openness, my claim is justifiable. To prove, for example, that memory's object also is God, would be an interesting project, still we have to omit it.

Now, if we analyze the human existence (*conditio humana*), we can observe that we are never content ourselves with the given reality. The desire of the mathematician to create a perfect mathematical system, our eternal striving for the good, the satisfaction of our everyday needs and again their emergence, or the transient beauty of art, etc...etc., they are all further steps for further worlds. All these human acts, products, feelings, etc., are open to further possibilities. We simultaneously feel the imperfection of these entities and their origin in the perfect, which transcends them. This is the origin of the experience of our strangeness in the world, but this is also the origin of our unshakable experience of being at home in this world, since, in spite of our all deficiencies and cruelty of the world, we are embedded in perfections. There is always something as a drive, which urges us towards an aim, what we can call the final stage or final relief. Man questions as well as being the object of questions. His questioning gains its full meaning, on the one hand, from the fact that the reality is questionable, the reality can be questioned, and on the other hand, from the fact that his final questions necessitate final answers.⁹⁸ This *conatus*, however, which asks about the being of all beings, is that which we call metaphysics.⁹⁹ Man wants to know – whereas this willing is realized primarily by his intellect – not only the whatness of things, but the totality as it is in its unity and coherence of its parts.

Nevertheless, one can reject metaphysics as well as the possibility of the cognition of reality. But with this rejection, one carries a similar action into execution, namely one replaces the intelligible cosmos (*kosmos noetos*) with death, materiality or nothingness. Replacement of the object of our *conatus* with something improper is that which Max Scheler called the installment of a finite good, an idol in place of God.¹⁰⁰ Idols, however, are varied. It seems that their number and variation is almost infinite. Scheler's project of the “shattering of

⁹⁸ On the relation of the intellectual act of questioning and the world-openness, in the Neo-Thomist school, Emerich Coreth contributed the most notably on the opening pages of his *Metaphysik* (Freiburg i.Br.: Herder, 1980).

⁹⁹ As we remarked in a previous chapter referring to Max Scheler: *anima naturaliter metaphysica*.

¹⁰⁰ See Max Scheler, *On the Eternal in Man*. Hamden: Archon Books, 1972: 267

idols” is therefore also an infinite endeavor. But precisely this infinite desire and process shows that we human beings pursue metaphysics. Even if there are idols instead of proper objects, even if there are so many dead-ends and deadlocks, reality still remains intelligible. On the other hand, in spite of all fragmentations and seemingly useless successiveness of life, we still gravitate towards totality. And since we explicitly or implicitly, pursue metaphysics, we come to the idea that we *must* to pursue metaphysics and we *must* question.

I claim that the question of being is implicitly present in all acts of the individual man (*actus hominis*) and in all human acts (*actus humanus*). One can skip particular problems and questions, but the question concerning man's basic orientation is inevitable. Even if mathematical rules possess a certain aprioriness and certitude, one can neglect them, since, in spite of their necessary nature, they do not belong essentially to human being. Man questions in the manner that he cannot evade his questioning, since it is a necessity and aprioriness, in which he himself is the subject. In this context man's openness is the framework of his most fundamental act of questioning. It might seem to be too stereotypical, but I think the following statement is still valid: if there is no openness to the world, we couldn't address the totality. From this follows that man exists insofar as he questions about (and in the same moment, affirms) the object of his openness: world, being, and God. In other words, man himself is the question relating the object of his openness.

Man's openness can have, however, many objects, and it seems that these objects are not necessarily of the highest value, that is, in many cases man does not question in all his acts the foundation of his existence. For example, in the intellectual openness towards a simple, contingent thing, like a documentary, at the first sight it doesn't mean necessarily a search for the intelligibility of his existence. The question, what our openness makes possible, is however not only one question among many, but it pervades the whole of the human existence. Karl Rahner developed a similar view on man's place in the world. He says that the

metaphysical question is not any question about any object at all within the implicitly presupposed horizon of the question about being. It is – as Rahner says – a radical question (in this sense differs from any other), which manifests the basic constituting principles of man.¹⁰¹ Later Rahner argues that this question is a transcendental question, which means that its main objective is to discover the basic human structure prior to any experience. Rahner develops a so-called transcendental philosophy stating that man implicitly already possesses the fullness of reality. His theory of the *Vorgriff auf das Sein*, the preapprehension of being, plays a decisive role in his theology and philosophy. He thinks that by the philosophical articulation of this concept one can express the fundamental being-and God-orientedness of man. Rahner, but this is true also for all the proponents of the transcendental Thomist tradition, claims that man already possesses somehow the totality of being. This “somehow”, or implicit knowledge is, however, highly problematic, since it rather seems to be a hollow knowledge than anything else. Asking the question of what kind of knowledge is preapprehension one would be compelled to say that it is a certain knowledge without any concrete content. Even if Rahner would respond to the question that “preapprehension can only be determined by establishing that to which it attains”,¹⁰² it wouldn’t solve the problem, since precisely its hollowness questions the *raison d’être* of the concept of preapprehension of being. One can rightly ask: what’s the point of presupposing and introducing a peremptorily coined concept if it doesn’t have any positive content of whatsoever. It is supposed to convey information about the most valuable object, in reality, however, it doesn’t fulfill this task. It seems therefore that introducing the concept of preapprehension is simply redundant.

Even if we cannot accept the final consequence concerning the notion of *Vorgriff*, there are two achievements of the transcendental Thomist school which we can accept: firstly,

¹⁰¹ Karl Rahner, *Spirit in the World*, New York: Continuum, 1994: 58.

¹⁰² Karl Rahner, *op.cit.* 143.

the emphasizing of the dynamic nature of the intellect; and secondly, the appreciating that this dynamic movement of the intellect is toward an absolute being, toward God.

When we try to unfold aspects in the person which can be open and concentrate on the faculty of the intellect, in contrast to the above mentioned transcendental Thomistic view, we do not realize an investigation of the conditions of human cognition, even if we come to the same conclusion that man is such a being who has questions about his own existence and about the totality of the world altogether. “Man questions.”¹⁰³ – we say with Rahner, and in this simple fact we can find the point of departure of the whole metaphysics. The entities of the world and man’s being as well can be set against the questioner: this is a final and irreducible phenomenon. On the other hand, however, the ground of the necessity of questioning is the questionableness of the world in its totality. The center of our interest is not only epistemological, rather metaphysical. We don't seek after only the subjective conditions of foundation of cognition, but try to realize a real foundation of the foundation (*Begründung der Begründung*).

In the problem of man's openness to the world we describe the questionableness of being and world as a response to man's peculiar intellectual dynamism. Nevertheless, we have to stress that man's openness has only a theoretical priority to the questionableness of the world. The focus of our interest, if I might repeat, is the openness of man's intellect. But how can one explore this dynamism and how can this be done in the best way? We can follow, for example, Saint Thomas Aquinas in the inquiry about human knowledge, and we can say that the facts that we perceive are not simply empty facts; they do not hang in the air. We not only accept the facts, but we also constantly evaluate, compare, and question them. Facts, happenings, acts, moments, different aspects of life, etc., stand in a wider context in the perspective of the knower. Owing to this wider context, we know that these facts are limited

¹⁰³ Karl Rahner, *op.cit.* 57.

and we experience our limitedness as well. The finite being, man, therefore has an a priori knowledge of being; or, to put in this way, at least he has knowledge about the fact that being is not absolutely unknown. If, therefore, we follow this latter “minimum” program, we can in fact say that being and world are “questionability”.¹⁰⁴ This insight concerning the world is the starting point of exploring the dynamism of the intellect, which goes hand in hand with the investigation of the phenomenon of the openness of the intellect. Only in this way can we proceed: the questionableness of the being and the world is a response to and an object of man's peculiar intellectual dynamism.

The starting point is therefore always man. His basic experience of contingency is a natural companion to his worldly existence. Nevertheless, the human being has an eminent place within the world, since he is aware of this contingency, whereas the other creatures – i.e. the irrational ones – are not. Only the human being is capable of asking questions and directing his senses beyond himself. The human being is the one capable of passing himself over, of regarding himself from the outside, i.e., from a remote point of view. There is no other living being, which can do that. It is therefore a very important characteristic of the intellect's openness that only human beings can have.

Yet the human being does not analyze himself only, but beyond this, the entirety of existence. This transcendent necessity and direction can be observed also within the arguments based on contingency: in order to be satisfied, we have to postulate a self-existing and by itself necessary being, which underlies every occurrence from every viewpoint (*ipsum esse subsistens per se necessarium*). The existence of such a being excludes non-existence and a cannot-be-otherwise existence; its greatness lies within its being the basis for everything, and as such, it is not very far from the mystery of the transcendental-mystical experience.

¹⁰⁴ See Karl Rahner, *op.cit.* 68.

Now, to understand what I mean by immediate or apriori knowledge of the world in case of openness seems to be difficult. This problem is in connection with the question of preapprehension of being. In order to understand the problem, let's compare our knowledge of the world and being with our knowledge of contingent facts. We obtain knowledge concerning things such as emotions, and objects. As the verb "obtain" expresses, there is a certain distance between the object and the knower. We "come closer" to things, we "lay siege" to things, we want to know its inner and outer structure and components and its connection with other things; in one word, we realize a certain type of essence-knowledge, i.e., we want to know what it is. In the cognition of entities and objects we – as it were – step to the thing. This, however, is a discursive kind of knowledge. In contrast to this, however, our knowledge concerning being and the world is not like wandering from one step to another, since this knowledge is not the product of a secondary reflection, but in itself is a primary one, even though it is open to be more consciously grasped, refined, etc.. In order however to know anything in the world, we have to suppose and we have to have knowledge about the being and the world. This knowledge is prior to any kind of other knowledge. Openness of the intellect therefore possesses a certain kind of knowledge, what we can call non-thematized or implicit knowledge. On the other hand in the matters of the world we can possess – this would be the ideal of knowledge – clear and explicit knowledge. From this follows the most important attribute of the discursive knowledge: it is an acquired knowledge, whereas precognition is not acquired, but the ground of (any other kind of) knowledge.

Man can question the world, because he knows that it exists, knows about its being. Man's all implicit, metaphysical questions refer, on the one hand, to the being of the question, on the other hand, to the being of questioning as act. As a matter of fact, however, we cannot give the final and substantive cause for this all-embracing question, which is hidden in all our acts, as for example we could give the cause of the question of "why does and does not the

horse move?” In this case we can answer the question if we point out the fact that the horse is lame or is dead. It is likewise sufficient if we refer to the fact, that under normal circumstances, horses move lashing. We can give the answer also by referring to the end (*finis*) of the question, namely that we would like to arrive somewhere. In the case of this concrete example we are able to explain the act of questioning as well to point to the object of the question, that is, its point of reference. In the case of the question referring to being, however, we cannot. From this follows the particular position of metaphysics among sciences, since it has to prove its theses by its own principles.

Man cannot know, cannot judge, cannot claim anything without presupposing the intellect's openness and being (*ens*) in an implicit way. There is no cognition, no acts without the prior grasp of the intellect's openness and being. Our intellect grasps things, even non-existing ones, as embedded in being. The question of man, the analytics of man and the question relating to being are inseparable linked. We cannot lose sight of either of them in dealing with one of them. Even if we start from man's everyday experience of his contingency, we have to acknowledge that what man does is a necessary metaphysical questioning and it includes in an eminent way himself, therefore human metaphysics is in the strongest connection with the analytic of man. In other words, as we have said in the previous chapter quoting Emerich Coreth's words: “Anthropology and ontology are [...] nothing but two aspects of one and the same philosophical approach.” As a preliminary conclusion, however, it seems that the intellect is openness *par excellence*.

The intellect can have a self-knowing relation. What we are trying to outline here is one of the traditional problems of philosophy. Its main thesis is the original unity of the cognition and the knower, which is called, according to Hegel and some other schools of philosophy, as being-with-itself (*bei-sich-sein*) of being. Since every being exists, it can be known by its existence (that is, by its participation in being). The importance of this insight is

enormous, since along this thought there can be seen the competence of philosophy in issues of theology. It also clearly opposes to any kind of metaphysical irrationalism, which says that there are domains of being and values unattainable for intellect. On the other hand, however, it also means a dismissal of all forms of skepticism, which deny the possibility of cognition. Above all this insight says that knowledgeableness constitutes the basic structure of all existent being and after all affirms the cognition of God.

I think, that our conclusion is in full accordance with Saint Thomas Aquinas, who says that *omne ens est verum*. This means that insofar as the particular being (or the existent) exists, it participates in being, and insofar as it participates in being, it is true, that is, cognizable. This cognizableness, however, is not added from outside to the particular being, but it is a constituent part of the being. This is the reason why we can say that the possibility to know things is a transcendental (taken in the sense of the transcendence of the transcendentals of medieval philosophy, that is, transcendental is, which is independent from the particular being and the specific categories of being) characteristic of all beings. *Quidquid enim esse potest, intelligi potest.*¹⁰⁵ - says Thomas Aquinas referring to the main thesis of his metaphysics, namely, every being is susceptible of being interiorised in thought and being known. Aquinas adds to the problem of being and cognition, that it is not a unity or compound of two distinct entities, but an original togetherness: *intellectum et intelligibile oportet proportionata esse, et in unius generis.*¹⁰⁶ We can ask, what does it mean in the case of knowledge and knower to have the same origin (*in unius generis*)? In this question we are interested in the philosophical ground of the unity. Now, according to Saint Thomas Aquinas,

¹⁰⁵ *Summa contra Gentiles* II. 98.

¹⁰⁶ *Sententia libri Metaphysicae*. Prooemium

being, which is susceptible of being interiorised, and the intellect, which is here the source of cognition, are one in the act (*actus*) of being: *intellectus et intelligibile in actu sint unum*.¹⁰⁷

Thomas Aquinas emphasized that everything that exists, is in being, and susceptible of being interiorized, therefore – being and cognition – is one in the act of being (*in actu sint unum*). In other words – using a Heideggerian vocabulary – the unity of being and cognition means an all-supposed “being-for-itself”, an “in-itself-reflectedness” or “subjectivity”.¹⁰⁸ While by the concept of “being-for-itself” we approach the problem from the viewpoint of being, the concepts of “in-itself-reflectedness” and “subjectivity” means the same thing, but from the viewpoint of cognition. The general meaning of these concepts is that the intellect has an active role in cognition and all that we know comes to be known by the illumination of the intellect. As we see material lights (lights of colors) in colors, so see we the “light” of the intellect in every cognizable thing as it illuminates them. For that very reason, if we suppose the original openness and activity of the intellect and not its passivity or numbness, then we can conclude that it is not the object that originates knowledge, but the mode as we interiorize it. Moreover, if we suppose that openness is one of the principal characteristics of the intellect, then we can disprove the naïve sensualist theory of cognition of materialists.

Cognition is not an encounter of two things in time, nor a coincidental finding of the other, nor a seizure of the other. I think that one shouldn't artificially divide cognition into two pieces, since the object and the knower are not “strangers” for each other, but there is an original mutual ordination. There are many passages where Thomas Aquinas refers to this. He says, for example with Aristotle, that *anima est quodammodo omnia*¹⁰⁹ or on another place

¹⁰⁷ Ibidem (I do not mean the coinciding of being and knowing in God, because God's knowing infinitely many possible worlds does not make these actual beings, nor is God all he knows, otherwise He would be finite, sinning etc.)

¹⁰⁸ As far as I know Saint Thomas Aquinas does not use either of the expressions *expressis verbis*, nevertheless, I think, that the expressions listed here mean the same as the Scholastic *reditio subjecti in seipsum*.

¹⁰⁹ *STh* I. q.14. a.1.; *STh* I. q.16. a.3.; or in the *De Ver* q.4. a.8., *De Ver*. q.24. a.10. (and in many other passages)

again referring to Aristotle that *idem est intellectus et quod intelligitur*.¹¹⁰ The point of all these passages is to underline that the ontic possibility of cognition is based on the openness of the particular being and the being. The passage of “man [soul] is in a sense all things” (*quodammodo omnia*) means that man is able know everything that is above and below the sky. Animals or other automatons do not have this characteristic, because they do not possess such a high level of openness in cognition. The authentic connection of man – in a sense – with everything in his cognition also means that knowing the thing in itself (knowing its *Ding an sich*), man does not deform or destroy it. It was Kant who claimed, that with the attainment of the *Ding an sich* we would deform and degrade it to a “phenomenon” or an “object”, therefore, according to Kant, man does not know the thing in itself. In a similar way Kant denied that man can know God and spiritual realities. His idealism – and this is precisely one defect of his philosophy – restricted human knowledge to the phenomena of space and time, and even here claimed that we do not know what space and time and things in them are in themselves, but know them as pure appearances formed by our a priori forms of intuition and perception, receiving from outside solely a chaos of sense impressions. When Kant proceeds to speak of our transcendental Ideas of world, soul, free will, God, immortality, etc., he sees them as entirely produced by human reason and while being necessarily thought by us, not giving us any knowledge of autonomous reality.

That is, Kant had not overcome the skepticism of Hume, since the “unreliable” experience remained the main criterion of his system. According to Kant, experience only provides us with a chaos of sense impressions that in some way issue from unknown things in themselves wherefore neither material things nor the spiritual soul and God can be known in themselves but rather are either appearances in time and space informed by our subjective forms of intuition of time and space or transcendental ideas like the world, soul, and God, that

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ScG II. ch.78. n.9.

are generated by the subject when it extends the categories (necessarily but in a certain sense “illegitimately”) beyond their application to appearances. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that the main reason for the Kantian agnosticism is not the misinterpretation of the alleged transcendental ego, but is due to not being grounded in the objectivity of cognition. Cognition, in my view, is given by the openness of things, and means perfection also for the one who, in a sense, “participates” in it. In this sense cognition, the most authentic act of the intellect, is neither a deformation, nor a degradation, but an authentic connectedness with things themselves, or, in other words, with objectivity.

Recapitulating our main points, we can say that in respect to the intellect man is open to the world in many senses. The former analysis tried to unfold these points albeit not in the length as these problems in fact would require. From the viewpoint of openness, however, I think there are four main points by which we can characterize intellect.

1. Man’s intellect implicitly possesses the totality of being. Man can possess the totality of being due to the peculiar character of his intellect, which is open to the totality of being. The openness of the intellect is, therefore, threefold: 1. the intellect is open to the preliminary, non-thematized knowledge of being (*Vorgriff*), 2. the intellect is open to the cognition of contingent beings and 3. the intellect is open to know being in its totality.
2. Holding the openness of the intellect is an essential requirement for a realist philosophy. If, according to our previous insights, knowledge is the self-giving of the object within the subject’s realm, then it also means that we have the possibility of obtaining knowledge of essences. In other words, we (our intellect) are open to things themselves. Needless to say, this insight has the most far-reaching consequences. Without this presupposition it would be nonsensical to talk about the possibility of attaining knowledge of any kind of

essence.

3. Man first and foremost is open to other persons. If we say that the intellect is a faculty, in which man is open to the world, then it helps to overcome solipsism as well as other objective materialist views of epistemology. The theory of openness of the intellect can better explain the complete return (*reditio completa*) of the subject, since it is always realized through another person, to whom the intellect is open. The affirmation of the existence of the other person refutes rigid forms of solipsism and provides solid ground for rejecting (sensualist) materialism, which claims that there are no spiritual beings and cognition is only sense experience.
4. Finally, the affirmation of the openness of the intellect not only explains the possibility of reaching towards objects, but the self-perfection of the knower (intellect) as well. The knower (our intellect) is not an isolated planet, which has nothing to do with the world around him and has no connection whatsoever. On the contrary, there is a positive relation between the knower and the objects, and there is a self-realization, that is, perfection (*intelligere est perfectio intelligentis*), that takes place in the “participation” in them.

The openness of the will

Among many faculties of man there is the faculty of the will. Our question in the present section of the chapter is: which characteristic does the openness of the will have in man? Our general question is in this section whether the human will can be characterized as open to the world or God. I think the best way to proceed in the framework of this problem is to analyze different human acts from the viewpoint of a possible openness. Nevertheless, our first working hypothesis should be a presuppositionless approach to the phenomenon of the

will. It means that we should avoid premature assumptions like all acts of the will are nothing but different types of openness or the common attribute of all acts of the will is their other-directedness. Of course, we have an anticipatory understanding on the nature of the will coming from our natural and everyday attitude. Whether these statements concerning the acts of will are true or not, the following discussion has to solve. Here, argumentation means the analysis of examples of concrete acts as they are given to us. I shall analyze phenomenologically and philosophically the different aspects and surfaces of (world-)openness of acts of the will. To analyze something phenomenologically means that I presuppose that the phenomenon of world-openness of acts of the will has a philosophically meaningful essence, which can be the subject of a phenomenological analysis.

First, I shall mention four general points, which characterize the will as a human faculty. Later, I shall characterize volitional acts in five points. Both analyses will be realized from the viewpoint of the openness of the will.

The will is a spiritual phenomenon, which influences and regulates our acts. There are basically two kinds of will. These two kinds of will differ in their direction.¹¹¹ The first kind of will is that which commands man in a positive way. Man can urge and command himself to do something. One can stimulate oneself in a situation, where one comes to the end of one's rope. For example, a sportsman in the last few meters, even if he is out of breath and under normal circumstances would give up the competition, can urge himself to complete the distance. His will, and within his will he himself wants to attain a goal, which is beyond his reach. We can say, therefore, that the sportsman in his will is open to something that is desired. The object of his desire is clearly a distinct entity, which exerts an influence on him. The simple "I will" of the sportsman expresses the sportsman's conscious attitude towards the

¹¹¹ There are many classical distinctions such as the will as responding to objects (endowed with some importance) and the will as commanding actions.

relation and difference which exists between him and his aim, and, at the same time, the conscious desire to overcome this difference.

There is, however, another type of will, which is the very opposite of the former, namely, it hinders the person from doing something. There are situations when we abstain or choose not to do something by our mental power. The best examples of this kind of will are when someone overcomes his instincts. According to their laws, Christian monks have to abstain from intercourse, that is, they must control one of their most decisive and natural instincts. Nevertheless, not every instinct has the same level of naturalness. In the case of a heavy pain we cry and suffer; we do it according to the drive of our instincts. We cry and suffer in each instance of injury, without restrictions. In the case of sexuality, however, which obviously has an overwhelming power, much deeper than other instincts can have, we do not initiate intercourse in every case, therefore sexuality, although it belongs to our everyday life, (since we are partly sexual beings), it is not as natural as for example eating and sleeping are. Now, let us take the example of the relation of will and the phenomenon of sexuality of monks. Monks can control the sexual instinct by the help of their will.¹¹² The instinct in question insofar as it were satisfied through sexual activity of any kind, according to their conviction, would cause serious harm in their relation with God because they would break their vow of chastity which they have freely taken and because sexual activity outside marriage is immoral also for those who are not monks. Therefore, they try to avoid living sexual relations, they abstain from intercourse. In short, they simply don't want to perform sexual acts of any kind including the legitimate sexual life of marriage. Of course, their will to renounce any good or evil form of human sexuality is not a mere negative will not to do something but has such noble positive motives as a special undivided love of God. We can reformulate our statement above: the simple "I will", that is the "I will, not marry nor have

¹¹² Again, we investigate this phenomenon from a phenomenological point of view, not presupposing God's grace, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, etc., as for example theologians do.

sexual relations with a wife” of the monk expresses the monk's conscious attitude to the relation of a state of affair which exists between him and his aim, and, at the same time, the conscious desire to overcome this difference. This, however, again presupposes a certain kind of openness of the will.

Another common characteristic of all acts of the will is that their starting point is the experience of desire or desires. This attribute again reveals an aspect of the openness of the will. Let us take the example of the will of eating a piece of cake. Before we would start to will to eat the cake, there are many desires which precede the actual will of eating. It does not mean, however, that desires initiate or define the act of will. Desires certainly influence volitional acts, but they are not the only initiators of an act. Volitional acts are, ontologically speaking, independent from desires. I think genuine volitional acts, by their definition, are free in the full sense of the word. Now, before we would want to eat the piece of cake, there is for example the desire to eat but not necessarily to eat the cake. We also might not just have the desire to eat because we are hungry or enjoy fine food but the more specific desire to eat something sweet in general and to eat this sweet cake in particular. Nevertheless, there are other desires, which are precisely the opposite of the former. There is, for example, the desire not to eat any sweet, since sweets before the meal spoil one's appetite. But there is also the desire not to put on weight, or precisely the opposite of this, to put some weight on, because of health reasons. Preceding the act of will there are therefore many desires which incline us to different actions and leave us different options. Now, in the example of the will of eating a cake, the will reconsiders and reconsiders, chooses between different possible actions based on its previous experiences. In this process one can observe a certain character, which is precisely the opposite of being closed in man's own world. Whenever man considers his experiences and deliberately, with his totality chooses and accomplishes one act of the will in contrast to others, he transcends the realization of other options. On the one hand, the will

transcends man, on the other, it essentially belongs to man. Independently of the quality of the desire (be it a wrong or a good direction), this capacity expresses the openness of the will.

The third point concerns the function of the will as it is in connection with the conscious choice between desires. Here, the emphasis is on being conscious. An animal or an impersonal being, referring back to our previous example, couldn't choose intelligently between desires, aims and means. Moreover, an animal couldn't reflect on its "deliberate" choice. Man, on the contrary, is able to think his choice over deliberately and to consider the consequences as well as to reflect on the fact that even if he has chosen to eat the cake, he knows, that he could have done otherwise. We can conclude that the faculty of the will is a specifically human feature. As our everyday examples show, even if I choose to do something – during and after the action – I know that there was no necessary constraint not to choose otherwise that I wanted with my full awareness. Now, the one who is aware or conscious of his acts, acts intentionally, in other words, has an authentic connection with entities or things of the world. This, however, again means the transcending of the borders of the surroundings of man, and shows that man possesses a world. Recalling some of the things we have said previously on world-openness and on Scheler's insights into the religious act and idols, we may add: Possessing a world – from the viewpoint of the will and deliberateness – means that theoretically man is able to respond with his will to the absolute totality of the world as well as, when he recognizes the finitude and limitation and contingency of the world – as the final object of his will – to God whom he can search for, desire, and, in the deepest level of free will adore and love for his own sake. It is here again that an inner connection between world-openness and god-openness becomes evident, not in the pantheistic sense of identifying God and world but on the contrary, in the Augustinian sense that the world, if we are open not only to its beauty and greatness but also to its finitude, cries out to us: look above us, and thus opens our minds to a being and a good that infinitely transcends the world. In other words, the

world-openness of intellect and will cannot even discover and open itself to its finitude and positive depth without discovering the need for an entirely new openness that can have as its object only the absolute being such that the world, if it were the only and ultimate object of openness, and our desire and will and heart would love it alone, would turn into an idol.

The fourth general characteristic of the will as human faculty is that it is always interwoven with the emotional and intellectual life. There are millions of emotions and deliberations along one single volitional act. In other words, volitional acts do not proceed all by themselves, rather, they are accompanied by emotions. But there are also intellectual justifications and motivations concerning the volitional act. When I, for example, want to eat the cake, although my will comprises the object of the eating and the cake, there are countless other secondary objects participating in the process of willing. Willing to eat the cake also means to consider the secondary object of nutrition: this food has a nutritional value, which is good and healthy for my body.

Willing to eat the cake also means to consider the real value of willing to eat the cake, that is, the value of that particular act of will. The “will” of impersonal beings or animals does not have this character. An animal for example cannot change its mind, cannot stop eating and turning to – according to its considerations – a higher value, thus acknowledging the lesser value of eating. An animal attacked during feeding stops eating and defends itself, but not because it deliberates and ponders upon the values of life and food. An animal does not have the capacity to distinguish between the values of the life and the food. Consequently, an animal will never sacrifice its life for higher reasons and values.¹¹³ Man can sacrifice his life as, for example, thousands of martyrs did.

Eating a cake is only a subjectively and provisionally satisfying good. Nevertheless, as an example it also shows the deep essence and vocation of free will and its transcendence

¹¹³ Even if there are some reports on that. I think, however, that these reports are based on misunderstandings and misinterpretations of animal behavior.

(namely it transcends the objectively and provisionally satisfying good) without which we cannot understand the will's world-openness and god-openness. If our relation to other persons or God is only a desire of our happiness, we cannot love them more than ourselves. We cannot make full justification for the deeds of martyrs, there is no justification of higher values and values at all without the transcendence of the will.

The most important different openness of free will is that of value-response. There were number of thinkers, especially in the 20th century such as Max Scheler, Dietrich von Hildebrand and Karol Wojtyla, who attributed special importance to the authentic understanding of the person. In their understanding, following the traditional thought, the person is unrepeatable, individual, undivided, and rational being endowed with dignity and freedom. In this sense value-response means loving someone not for my own sake or for my own desires, emotions, but for something or someone that has similar human personality and freedom as I have. It is clear that only human beings can have human personality and characteristics which are accompanied to the person. Love for the beloved person's sake is a typical example of value-response of the free will. In this example our will governs us to love something, which does not belong to us, which is totally beyond our reach. Now, to love for the beloved person's sake (who also has free will and in many cases the free will of the beloved person can cause us serious harms) means to accept the innermost core of his or her being and leaving our own – in many cases selfish – desires and deliberations. In cases like this we love the person only for him- or herself (*persona est amanda propter seipsam*). Or another example of value-response of free will is the love of God. In both cases we govern our will according to the dignity and inalienated value(s) of the beloved person. In both cases we respond to the person, and it is a real openness of the will if it can give an adequate answer to the value of the person.

As we see, the act of the will stands in the middle of countless emotions, intellectual deliberations, motivations, justifications, etc. However, this means also that each act of the will is in essential connection with reality (even if the will is directed to fiction, the point of fiction is to point to a higher reality). In other words, the acts of the will are open to the world. By this openness the will does not operate like the unidirectional instincts of animals. In comparison to human beings, animals behave like “idiots”, taken in the ancient Greek sense of the word. The word *idiot* comes from the Greek *idiotes*, which originally referred to a person who did participate in the political or public life of the *polis*, in other words, someone who lived an individual life, unconcerned with larger, political affairs. *Idiotes* are those who can concentrate only on one single issue,¹¹⁴ which is most of the cases themselves. Now, man owing to the openness of his will, which – as we said – is interwoven with the intellectual and emotional life, does not behave along the (one single) principle of instincts, but lives a freestanding autonomous life.

Now, to sum up, we can characterize volitional acts in five points from the point of view of their openness.

1. In the act of the will there is an anticipatory knowledge of the aim. It means that although the aim is the last in the order of execution, it, on the one hand, determines the whole process of the act of will, on the other, it directs and renders intelligible the act. As Thomas Aquinas said: *Finis est primus in intentione et ultimus in executione*.¹¹⁵ Having an anticipatory knowledge of the aim of the act means that the will already possesses something that actually does not have the willing man. In this sense the will is open to the anticipatory knowledge of the aim.

2. In every volitional act there is a certain aspiration for the particular aim of the act. For example, when I want to achieve something, then the final aim functions like an independent

¹¹⁴ The meaning of the word *idiotes* is „man of one issue” or „man of one business”.
¹¹⁵ *Summa Theologiae* I.II. 1.3. ad 2

leitmotif for all my acts. Independently of whether this aim is internal (that is, one's efforts are directed in the direction of the self) or external, it is always something extra to my present state. The will, therefore, aspiring this “extra”, has to be open to this.

3. There is, however, a constant reconsideration of the possible consequences of the modes of act and different acts. Reconsidering the possible consequences indicates the openness of the will to the consequences of the reconsideration. It is a peculiarity of the act of will that we can define an absolute zero point as the origin or source of the act: this zero point is the decision concerning the act. When I decide something, in its own context, everything must be subordinated to this decision. The decision itself, however, is not yet accomplished, the content and the object of the decision is still in process. As a matter of fact, a decision can be never completed, since whenever it is completed, it ceases to be a decision proper. Decision, however, as one of the most important factors of the volitional act, indicates a certain lack in man. This lack must be overcome and replaced by positive content. This, however, means that man opens up to the world, breaks out of the closedness of his present state. When I, for example, make up my mind to do something, then this decision will serve as principle and driver throughout the whole project. The factor of decision therefore also indicates the open character of volitional acts.

4. The ultimate characteristic which distinguishes an act of the will from other acts is the peculiar character of the realization or execution of acts. Now, man can never participate in his acts with and in all his totality, as for example God can. Man's acts therefore are not identical with his personality. The reason for that is that man does not possess himself, he is in the process of continuous change. Man is in reality – using the phrase of Max Scheler and Karol Wojtyła – an “acting person”, who realizes himself through his acts as authentic connections with the world, but this self-realization, because of our worldly, individual being, is only partial. His different acts represent different aspects of his personality, as well as

different dimensions of his personality take part and are realized in these acts. Man cannot compress his whole reality into one single volitional act. This is because man is a contingent being: contingent in all acts of his being, contingent in his acts, contingent in the deliberation of his act as well as in its consequences. As a matter of fact, strictly speaking one cannot pre-calculate the outcomes of man's acts. Since the outcome, the execution of a human act immediately "leaves" man. In the case of God, however, it is just the very opposite. Since God is not a contingent being, his will does not constitute an independent faculty, which would acquire more (in being) than what God is. As Thomas Aquinas says, since there is no difference between God's being and essence (between His *esse* and *essentia*), the will of God, that is the principal object of the divine will, is His essence.¹¹⁶ We can conclude that the human realization of the act of the will can be considered as an act, which surpasses man, therefore this character also proves the openness of the act of the will.

Nevertheless, there are other instances which show different forms of closedness of the will to the world and to God. One example for the closedness of the will is when man follows the path of his own desires. Concupiscence is a typical example of the closedness of the will. In cases like this man follows his "blind" or "shortsighted" will, by which he finds temporal pleasure and values of lower standard, and rejects God's original will, which, however, would provide higher values. Pride is again an example for the very opposite of the openness of the will. A conceited person as a matter of fact can lose his self-control. His will follows contingent purposes, which, however, are non-existent. To believe, for example, that the writer of this essay has reached the stage of holiness is a deception, since it contradicts to the facts of his present state. With believing this, his will would lead him acting against his original vocation. It would restrict his freedom and finally it could pervert his whole personality. Pride, therefore, leads to a closedness to God and the world, and is an entirely

¹¹⁶ See: *Summa contra Gentiles* lib. I. cap. 73-74.

wrong direction of the will.

Nevertheless, the two examples also show that, even if the will can take a wrong direction, ontologically speaking the will is open to the infinite. The transcendence of man's vocation means that we have to find it beyond our own – many times misleading – will. In our experiences (of goodness, truth, etc.) we directly experience that we are ordained to the infinite, on the other hand however, nothing prevents us to say no to our infinite vocation. Because of the contrary nature of affirmation and negation, the conflict of egoism (that is, egoism of my own will) and openness can result in an existential crisis, which can lead man to sin. But even the sinful person as well as his misled will is open to the infinite reality.

The openness of the heart

There are many faculties in the human being. Nevertheless, I think – if I might generalize the principal thesis of my work – that they all share the same outward direction (of their common openness) and all have the very same ultimate direction and object.¹¹⁷ In other words, in their openness they are all open to God as their ultimate object.¹¹⁸ It is also true for those acts (having their origin in any of the faculties), which seem to have an inward direction, such as thinking or self-observation. One of the typical forms of the world-openness of man is love. Philosophers usually consider love as the faculty of the heart. Our serious love connections are transmitted from heart to heart. In this section we are interested in the openness of the heart. Our question: What peculiarities the openness of different types of acts of love has?

¹¹⁷ A faculty is not an act and does not as faculty have an outward direction in the way acts have one, but possibly in a very different sense. Faculties are more properly directed as potentialities to acts in the person, and in this sense they can have objects.

¹¹⁸ The openness of different human characteristics and of man himself is a huge topic, that we cannot investigate here in its fullness. The present chapter cannot comprise all the aspects of openness in all possible human acts. The chapter therefore should be taken as outline of a vaster topic.

Throughout the history of philosophy, the heart was defined as the innermost core of the human being where attitudes such as love reside. In my view the phenomenon what we call heart is the center of the person. In this sense heart is the the center of human affective life, which includes intentional and spiritual forms of affectivity or any kind of feelings.

In common language we call someone open-minded and open-hearted when one sincerely gives room for the reception of information, facts coming from somewhere else. For example if, in a serious conversation, I thoughtfully listen and accept the complaints of my interlocutor, things that embarrass him, affect his life, get under his skin, etc., I can be considered open-hearted. I am open to his words, as well as his feelings, his hidden emotions. This openness enables me – beyond the mere hearing of his complaints – to comprehend what is hidden in his spoken words, as well as, what he himself – in some cases – can neither comprehend nor formulate. In its general meaning the openness of the heart means to be open basically to everything, but not everything that is heard, seen or experienced is good to hear, see and experience for man. In other words, not everything is valuable or good, and would contribute to the development of the personality of man.

The receptive character of the openness of the heart – as well as its responsive character to the other person, the availability to the other, self-donation, etc., – is a constitutive element of the human being, it can, however, also lead to miserable delusions. Take the example of many delinquents, who try to take advantage of the open-heartedness of many people. For example, in misappropriating donations, criminals misuse open-heartedness of the heart of someone else with the intention of not fulfilling the real, expected object of that person's openness. In these cases, the openness of the heart of the victim is directed to something; it has a certain object, which can and is desired to be achieved, but can be also substituted with something else. The latter case, however, is what we call fraud, and can cause serious injuries or trauma to the victim. Openness of the heart in cases like this, therefore, can

have many different objects: appropriate objects, inappropriate objects, virtual objects, real objects, etc. It should also be noted that there is qualitative difference between the objects as answers to openness; that is, there are good, less good and wrong objects of openness of the heart. An act of fraud of the victimizer is also an answer to the openness of the heart of the victim, however an inadequate one. In short, since openness of the heart is always an openness to something, its openness demands an answer.

The former two examples can be considered two special forms or manifestations of openness in love of the victim. Now, we continue the investigation of examples of the openness of the heart and we turn to another example, another form of love. In the next example we will consider sincerity as a certain form of openness of the heart. We usually say that a good marriage depends on the sincere openness of the partners. If the partners are fully open to the other, then we speak of a good marriage. I do think, however, that sincerity sometimes does more harm than good, since sincerity is not the single value in a love relationship. There are so many problems arising in the family because of the erroneous understanding of values. Influenced mainly by the spirit of the age, which says that there is no higher value than sincerity independently of whatever you do in your life, partners usually say that the highest value is sincerity regardless of how inappropriate or disgusting the issue is which they share with the partner. To be sure, sincerity is an important value in spousal love, but not the only one. It is associated with numerous other values and there is in spousal love – as in every worldly situation – a certain hierarchy of values. Sincerity in spousal love plays a decisive role, but in certain situations other values, for example the value of good manners or of consideration of what a beloved person can bear to hear, put the value of openness of sincerity into perspective and show that a flat sincerity in simply and inconsiderately revealing everything to another person is no authentic moral value. In spousal love, however, there are other more authentic aspects of openness.

In spousal love – as for example in friendship too, which phenomenologically likewise is a certain type of love – there exists a certain intellectual openness toward the partner. This openness is manifested when the spouses take each other into their confidence, or when they carefully listen to the sometimes unfounded complaints of the other, and, being prompted by the complaints, try to help to overcome the situation. Intellectual openness in spousal love, however, might concern good events in life. The married couple can have many good, common experiences, such as the experience of joy over their children's success. The openness of the heart can manifest itself in many other forms in love. Without providing more examples, we can say that they all share the character of other-directedness. This means that performing the act of love the direction of the act points to an other entity, which can be an object or objects (which is necessarily a lower level of the full meaning of love) or person or persons (which is a higher level of fulfillment of the act of love) or both.

Besides the intellectual openness, there is also the bodily openness in spousal love. The bodily aspect plays a decisive role in the relation of man and woman. In spousal love, it is a unique way of the realization of unity of man and woman. In Dietrich von Hildebrand's view, sexuality finds its full meaning and place only in the marriage of a man and a woman. Within this context, although the body is only one of the “vehicles” of self-giving, its role is indispensable. The aim of spousal love is the total self-giving of the person to the other, where self-giving can be conceived as one special form of openness. Now, such an intensity and degree of loving openness that makes the total mutual sexual gift and union an expression of spousal love and is infinitely more than purely “sexual openness” found also in a whore. The openness of total self-giving in a love of another person for her own sake and expressed also in the conjugal act, cannot be found in phenomena of purely “sexual openness” which are totally different from spousal love, such a promiscuity or sexual games of unwed couples.

Moreover, the sexual aspect plays a lesser or no role at all in other categories of love.

Hildebrand says concerning the unique place of spousal love:

Through a real love, man is drawn to his depth. His relation to the entire world becomes different, more authentic.

This spousal love aspires to a union which extends much farther than that of simple friendship, filial love or parental love. It desires a bodily union. In spousal love, the body of the beloved assumes a unique charm as the vessel of this person's soul...¹¹⁹

We see that spousal love clearly possesses the bodily aspects of openness. The spouses are open to the other in, as well as through, their body. Moreover, they can perform the most intimate act of bodily union. In contrast to this, while there can be an intellectual openness to the other in friendship, the bodily aspect plays a minimized role. Friends are intellectually and spiritually open to the other, and this relation is mutual,¹²⁰ nevertheless sexuality, and the bodily aspect of sincere openness by its definition, does not constitute an essential part of friendship. In the case of friendship therefore, the bodily aspect of the openness of love is missing.

In general we can say that all kinds of love have the character of other-directedness. Other-directedness, however, presupposes that there is a certain order of love, as for example Plato has explained in his Symposium, in a way that does not take into account the unique nature of spousal love between man and woman but rather sees the example of love that includes the sexual sphere in homosexual love, even though holds that this love ought not be “lived out” in its sexual dimensions as is especially shown in Alcibiades-speech on Socrates in the Symposium. In the Symposium, *Eros* is the love of good and beauty, nevertheless, *Eros* starts precisely from the lack of good and beauty. In this sense, *Eros* is the guiding principle of man's life, which shows how to overcome and how to live real (philosophical) life. Since the aim of love – says Plato – is the generating in Beauty, one can attain it through stages. On the first stage there is the physical love, on the second the spiritual love. On the third stage

¹¹⁹ Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Man and Woman*, Chicago, Illinois: Franciscan Herald Press, 1966: 18.

¹²⁰ Since it is due to the essence of friendship to be mutual.

one loves arts, then coming to the fourth, there are the lovers of truth. This is followed by the stage of science and cognition, and on the ultimate stage there can be found lovers of the absolute Beauty. This ascent in love to the “final and highest mystery” begins with love for an individual young man and ends with love for the Form of Beauty, which “always is and neither comes to be nor passes away, neither waxes nor wanes.”¹²¹ Following Plato, we can say that the other-directedness of love cannot stop at particular entities nor worldly, although beautiful things. When we talk about other-directedness, it does not mean that the direct object (direction) of the openness would be the typical other. The act of love by its essence exceeds the other and strives for the love of a person in her totality. It is also true for such a paradoxical phenomenon like self-love. We would suppose that self-love is directed only to the person who performs this act. Self-love is, however, only the first step toward others. In other words, self-love is one form of love, which centers round the self, but radiates through the borders of the self. The degree to which one loves oneself will determine the degree to which one is able to extend love to others. Those who hate themselves, that is, cannot perform an authentic form of love and actually perform an antithesis of it, are unable to exercise a sympathetic, self-offering act. Consequently, those who hate themselves are closed in their heart to themselves as well as to others.

In the following we will concentrate on features of openness of the heart and love towards God. The main question of the section on the openness of the heart was: what peculiarities the openness of different types of acts of love has? Our main question here is: in what sense does the openness of the heart towards God differ from other types of openness of the heart. Openness of the heart to something reaches its highest point in the ordination of man to God. Saint Augustine expressed the restlessness of the heart that has not found God in his famous saying: “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, restless is our heart until rests in

¹²¹ Plato, *Symposium* 211a.

you.” This restlessness which any man, even the most evil and closedminded possesses, on the hand implies a structural openness of man to God, and on the other hand is a sign that man is not yet in a comprehensive intellectual, volitional, and affective way open to God. In the latter sense openness of the heart means a readiness to accept values, goods, and the true vocation of man. Since God is the highest good, value and the most loveable being for man, man’s openness finds its highest object in the love of God. The openness of the heart towards God therefore has no limitations in the sense that openness can have in the case of friendship or spousal love for instance. Openness of the heart in spousal love, for example, necessarily encounters the “limits” of the other person and, in a positive sense, is, through its exclusivity, limited to one person only, which is far from an imperfection of spousal love: the openness of the spousal love of the husband aims at his wife, but only his wife and not other women. In this kind of act of love the openness of the heart must be directed at one individual and irreplaceable person, otherwise this spousal love ceases to be spousal love and becomes something else – in many cases a perverted form of love and openness. When man is open to God, in his heart he encounters the fullness of love and goodness. The openness of the heart to God comprises in an incomparably higher manner all aspects of the openness that we discussed in the preceding part of this section. In the openness of the heart towards God therefore man can really find his rest.¹²²

Investigating the different faculties of man, we have tried to characterize the openness of the heart from the aspect of love. This is basically what we have done so far in this section. There are, however, numerous other forms of love and similar phenomena, in which one could also point out the characteristics of openness of the heart. Solidarity, sympathy, fraternity, brotherhood, patriotism, benevolence, parental love, God's love toward man, endearment, affection, attachment, passion, fervor, ardor, charity, desire, adoration, worship,

¹²² „...requiescat in Te.”

etc., etc., are all individual cases of the very same phenomenon, love.¹²³ They are all special kinds of love(s) sharing common characteristics. From our point of view, however, the most important is that the character of openness of all these cases of love is undeniable. In one way or another, they all share the attribute of being open to something or someone. We have seen in the previous examples that some of them have the bodily aspect of openness, some of them not; some of them are only intellectually open to the other lacking the bodily factor, some of them not; some of them essentially involve the corporate aspect such as patriotism, others not. However we characterize the different forms of love, one after the other, there is one attribute which seems to be common in all manifestations of love, this is the other-directedness.

Openness of the faith

In the following section I shall concentrate on another aspect in which the person can be open. I shall analyze the openness of faith, presupposing that faith is one of man's most important acts. Throughout the whole thesis the main idea was to show openness as a kind of ontological openness of man, which can actualize itself through different acts. Searching for the possible manifestations and actualizations, however, I think that the act of faith is also a significant “place” for the manifestation of openness. Here I continue the restricted analysis of the previous sections concentrating on faith exclusively from the viewpoint of openness, since we cannot engage in giving a full account on the attitude of faith taken into consideration all its aspects.

Contemporary philosophy uses the term belief to indicate the attitude man has, whenever man takes something to be the case or regards it as true. On the other hand, the term faith is used to refer also to the same attitude, but – in some languages, such as in Hungarian,

¹²³ Understandably we cannot study all of these cases.

my mother tongue – in a stronger way. We usually say that faith is a stronger belief than simple everyday “belief,” and based on an unquestioning confidence.

We must here sharply distinguish at least the following three things; 1. A belief in the sense of a conviction (or uncertain opinion) that is in no way based on accepting another person’s trustworthiness, such as when, looking at the clouds on the sky, say we believe that it is going to rain on the next day, and: 2. The belief that what a friend tells us true because we believe that he knows or has good reasons for his belief or observed the facts he communicates to us, and trust his veracity wherefore we believe what he told us. This belief is first of all rooted in a confidence and belief *in* another person that is the basis for holding true something simply because another person told it to us; that belief in her is the basis of beliefs that the judgments she makes are true. 3. Belief in the sense of a religious response of faith and acceptance of what God has revealed (mostly through a trustworthy person or witness). This faith, as faith in the second sense, is a *faith that* some ‘X’ is ‘y’, because a trustworthy person told us so, but its distinctive nature is that it is a religious act and directed at God, not at a human person, which gives it a very different character for many reasons that we cannot here explore in depth.

All of these three meanings of belief are a belief *that* or a faith *that* and therefore must be distinguished from:

4. The act of faith or belief *in*, that is an act of trust and confidence in the trustworthiness and veracity of a person that makes us believe that what such a person tells us is true. This faith *in someone* is also present in the religious faith, in the faith in God and his veracity (that is the basis of the *faith that* what God has revealed, normally through the mediation of human persons whom we have to trust, is true). Impersonal beings cannot be the object of this act of belief or faith *in*, but they, or states of affairs regarding them can of course be the object of a *belief that*, as is for example the case when we believe many things

about impersonal beings such as that plants and animals were created by God, have lived in paradise before the fall, etc.

Another point in the discussion of faith is that we must not identify faith with the degree of its strength. There is also weak or hesitant religious faith, which nonetheless continues to be faith. This weak religious faith must not be confused with some strong convictions about certain scientific matters. The latter is strong conviction, but it is in no way identical with – weak or strong – religious faith. In my view religious faith, at least a religious faith that is based on some divine revelation, such as Jews, Christians, and Moslems believe to be the basis of their religion, is always based in a “belief in”. I also consider the term of religious faith stronger and more important from the point of view of openness, because it rests on a certain confidence in a person, whereas free-floating convictions based on observations and assumptions do not rest on the trust in the credibility of a witness.

Nevertheless, there is one verb, “to believe”, to indicate all the acts we of belief and faith we have mentioned. We can say, therefore, that the terms belief and faith are frequently used synonymously, which gives easily rise to confusing quite different things.

According to this preliminary definition (an attitude that man has, whenever he takes something to be the case or regards it as true), to believe something doesn't involve necessarily reflecting upon what is believed. There are, accordingly, a number of things that man believes in his everyday life. It seems therefore, that first of all, it is useful to distinguish between different kinds of beliefs according to the consciousnesses of their objects. We shall not distinguish here again between impersonal and personal beliefs; my distinction concerns the everyday usage when we do not reflect on the object of belief and proper usage when we think of the object of belief in question. There are instances of unreflectively believing in persons or of believing that certain states of affairs obtain. These kind of unreflected beliefs pervade the whole of our everyday life. In this everyday usage the term belief does not

necessarily involve any uncertainty or any reflection about the matter in question. We can believe, for example, that a machine such as an airplane works reliably so that we will not have a crash. Ordinary men are not familiar either with design and construction, or with functioning of an airplane, nevertheless they still trust the crew that they can drive the monstrous aircraft without failure, they believe to the constructors that they are well versed in the sciences of physics and aerodynamics, or that they base at least their rules and operations of building airplanes and their operating aircrafts on the cognition of these sciences. Moreover, they believe in physics of the physical world that its principles shall continue to work in the same way (analogously) as so far in their life, and, in the very same act, they believe in countless other things. Numerous things we believe are quite mundane, such as that there is a functioning lamp on my desk, or that tomorrow there is another day or that I can pay with the same currency in the same country. Other examples show that one can have or lose one's faith in a medicine (sometimes without any justification), or that I can have or I can lose my faith in my favorite soccer team, writer, composer, etc. All these examples show that beliefs are essential parts of our mundane life; they play a decisive role in our everyday life, and forming beliefs is one of the most salient features of the human mind. At this stage of the investigation we did not apply the distinction between faith in and faith that.

Now our question is: how can we characterize belief from the point of view of openness? In our previous investigations we considered openness as a constitutive or essential mark of the person. From this it would follow that belief as a human attitude is also one manifestation of this openness. Opennesses, however – as we have seen in our previous studies on the characteristics of aspects in which man can be open – are not necessarily conscious. As we have seen, even if man is ontologically open to the totality of the world, his openness sometimes remains unreflected and does not necessarily lead to an intellectual or volitional attitude of openness. The same goes for faith. The examples above show that

independently of the object and the content of the belief, the belief can remain unreflected. The usage of a vehicle, for example, doesn't require any kind of consciousness concerning the complex functioning of a car or an aircraft. We simply believe in the functioning of the vehicle in question: for example, we simply believe that there is something going on with the petrol in the engine which drives the car. This act of belief, however, is still an authentic one. In all these acts we place our confidence into a thing or person that is outside of our reach. We believe that this person or thing can work or function in accordance with our – hidden or explicit – expectations. On the other hand, we are in a certain sense “delivered to the object or content of our beliefs”. This means the subjective side of belief: objects and contents of our beliefs might also determine us to a certain extent. Beliefs, however, that are not based on believing in a person and believing a person, are more *pure forms* of a *belief that*, which is more based on our repeated experience than on the deeper meaning of confidence and trust in a person, such as believing in God. Nevertheless, I think, this act also entails the element of “placing one’s confidence in something” but we do not go to the ultimate root of such beliefs.

This type of faith in the first sense has the character of openness insofar as its object lies outside of man. In this sense we believe something – that a state of affairs existed, exists presently or timelessly, or will be realized in the future – that is distinct from us. When we say that we “believe in the competence of the pilot of an aircraft,” we really believe *that* the pilot is competent such that “belief in” is here a misleading expression. More similar to the “faith in” is the trust we place in the pilot before entering the airplane: the belief that the belief in are closely connected in a further way: we must believe that he is not a kidnapper but an honest person who wants to get us to our destination, etc., and therefore trust him and deliver ourselves, entrust ourselves and our loved ones to the pilot. At the same time, however, a less tangibly person-directed trust lies in exposing ourselves to the principles of physics, trusting that they will continue to be upheld in nature, as well as to the previous work of the

constructors and engineers, trusting that they were not only competent but had honest intentions. Thus also this trust that is not tangibly directed to a person or a “faith in,” has in the last analysis a personal addressee. Delivering oneself to someone, i.e., delivering oneself to essentially unknown principles and persons, means being open to certain things that lie beyond the reach of our certain and of our own knowledge in general.

There are other examples, in which one can also detect the openness of the faith. The object of the faith even in its everyday meaning indicates that there is a certain kind of directedness – according to the classical distinction – in believing *in* someone and *to* something. Objects of belief in the common sense are those toward which the acts of belief are directed. In the example of believing that tomorrow there is another day, the object of my belief obviously signifies a different entity than me. In this example, the object of my belief is that the day tomorrow will really come to be. I, however, because of my ontological structure and cognitive limits, cannot have full possession of the coming days; it means that I am open to the coming days. Thus I say that ontologically and epistemologically man is open to the coming days, the way, however, as he realizes this openness can take many forms: he might try also to change some things that are within his power, or he can be closed to this possibility.

Besides the everyday usage of the notion of belief, there is the belief in a religious sense. In this context we talk about religious belief, in which the person more or less reflects on the content and object of his belief or faith. A person is said to belong to a certain religion, at least in the case of a religion that is based on some texts and teachings handed down to us through human persons who claim to have received them from God, insofar as he accepts, that is believes, the principal elements of the religious teaching in question. Nevertheless, non-believers – taken in its everyday meaning – confess also to believe in certain things. Believers and non-believers can also be open to pseudo- or conflicting scientific beliefs,

moreover, the acceptance of scientific (or pseudo-scientific) views is analogous to the acceptance of the dogmas of religions: it takes place through authority and belief. Now, there are many transitional degrees between the total acceptance and refusal of religious faith which presents difficulties and creates debates for scholars exploring statistics of world-views.

In the traditional philosophical definitions of faith appears the transcendence of the divine being, not only the ontological transcendence and difference of God in relation to the human being, but also the “cognitive” transcendence of God and divine things that, as objects of religious faith reachable only through grace, lie beyond all reach of purely rational human knowledge, as well as the reflection on this transcendence. Generally, in all these definitions, faith is defined in contrast to the philosophical knowledge of God through human reason. Saint Thomas Aquinas' description of the “twofold mode of truth in what we profess about God” can be a good example of this distinction:

There is a twofold mode of truth in what we profess about God. Some truth about God exceeds all the ability of the human reason [and this is the domain of faith]. Such is the truth that God is triune. But there are some truths which the natural reason also is able to reach. Such are that God exists, that He is one, and the like.¹²⁴

It is however not only in the reflection on religious matters, which we would call faith – taken in the proper, religious sense – that an open attitude is apparent. It's clear that faith as a human faculty is open insofar as man reflects on the object of his faith and by this reflection intellectually grasps his distance from the object of his faith.

There is, however, another aspect in which man can be open. The problem of fundamental difference and immeasurable distance between God and man gains a full description in the main work of the German theologian and religious scholar, Rudolf Otto. Otto suggests a comprehensive ‘name’ for the object of religious experience: God is *Mysterium Tremendum et Fascinans*. Otto holds that man’s “creaturehood”, as one of the

¹²⁴ *Summa contra Gentiles* I. 3.

main characteristics of the religious experience, points to a higher order, that is, that there is something to which our creature-feeling is addressed. He says:

All that this new term, 'creature-feeling', can express, is the note of submergence into nothingness before an overpowering, absolute might of some kind; whereas everything turns upon the *character* of this overpowering might, a character, which cannot be expressed verbally, and can only be suggested indirectly through the tone and content of a man's feeling response to it. And this response must be directly experienced in oneself to be understood.¹²⁵

Following the train of thoughts of Rudolf Otto, we can say that from the side of the creature, faith properly speaking is a response to divine revelation. Faith is conviction of the truth of something revealed to us through God. In the New Testament, a conviction or belief about man's relationship to God and divine things, generally included the idea of trust and hope. As Saint Paul writes: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb 11:1) He uses the word 'evidence', quite a strong expression, which means that faith is a kind of evidence by which the unseen object of belief is manifesting itself with a certainty proper to the strong reasons and inner higher rationality, carried by grace, of the act of faith and the intelligibility and inner truth of its object. On the one hand, however, faith is hardly comparable with knowledge, in particular with scientific knowledge; on the other hand, it is far more evident or held by the believer to be true in a much more certain and unhesitating way than any scientific knowledge.

The definition and proper description of faith has been a problem for philosophy and theology from their inception. Alice von Hildebrand traces back the real origin of the exceptional character of faith and says that "*the contents of faith are such that they lie totally beyond the ken of human competence. The only legitimate basis of a religious act of faith is an absolute divine authority.*"¹²⁶ According to Alice von Hildebrand, a kind of

¹²⁵ Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy. An Inquiry into the Non-rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational.* (trans. J.W. Harvey) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958: 10.

¹²⁶ Alice von Hildebrand, *Introduction to a Philosophy of Religion.* Chicago, Illinois: Franciscan Herald Press, 1971: 51.

communication exists between man and the divine being. The source of this communication is, however, not man, but God. Now, this suggests that we have to stress man's fundamental openness to being able to receive the communication of the Other. Given his status as a creature, it follows that man can recognize his contingency as well as his transcendence. In this context man is the one, who is *ab initio* communicated and addressed. The Christian, for example, believes that God has communicated some of the fullness of His nature through creation and, in a much more perfect and comprehensive sense, through Jesus Christ. The religious faithful believes that divinely revealed knowledge and events lead both to a deeper self-knowledge of man and prepare the ground, on which the highest acts of freedom can unfold, a freedom which, religiously understood, gets unfolded and exists primarily as openness to a divine revelation. In a certain sense, also a searching atheist, such as Edith Stein was in her youth, can be open to revelation and perform a free act of opening oneself to revelation "if it exists." Such a conditional openness to divine revelation is of course very different from the one of the believer.

The fact that man can be dialogically addressed by God means that he also bears the responsibility toward the self-communicating God. Now, any bearing and above all any assuming of responsibility also entails having a conscious and open relation to the other person, whether human or divine. Therefore, also in this sense of faith and of bearing responsibility man is open.

Faith and reason (*fides et ratio*) are commonly accepted by believers to be two distinct ways through which the human mind can gain knowledge. Faith in the proper religious sense, however, is often conceived, even by some of the greatest philosophers who have been open to religion, as Plato (though he introduces another higher meaning of faith when he regards in the *Phedo*¹²⁷ a knowledge about life after death that we would receive through a "divine

¹²⁷ See *Phedo* 63c. In the 62a he also speaks about "secret teachings". Secret teachings might be understood as orphic mysteries.

word” from “the other side” as higher than philosophical knowledge) as an inferior form of knowledge (*pistis*/faith that does not even deserve the term knowledge) and is underestimated by some philosophers and seen in contrast to rational, natural knowledge. In the case of natural knowledge, one can obtain knowledge by inference, deduction, calculation, etc. In faith, what we believe, the content of faith stems neither from inference nor human reasoning. The personal interior conviction, acceptance and loving commitment to Divine Revelation and its call by the believer constitute faith in which “man surrenders completely and gives himself in an act of absolute trust.”¹²⁸ Faith always contains a total turning away from worldly goods. We don’t refer here only to the ethical aspect of the conversion, because, even if it is a significant part of the conversion, it is not the most important part. The amelioration of the moral life is only one aspect of conversion. The word for conversion, already used by Plato for a similar phenomenon,¹²⁹ and above all used by John the Baptist in the Gospel, is the ‘*metanoia*’, usually translated as conversion or also as repentance, i.e. changing one’s mind for the better, abhorring your past sins, and heartily resolving to amend your life. But, I think, it is better if we translated it as a radical ‘turning away’ from one’s whole past life and ‘turning towards’ God and relying on Him. In this sense faith is a radical answer to the mysterious divine holiness. We have to stress that faith, in the interhuman context, and in a new sense in the religious sense of belief in God and believing God, is a real act of cognition, and theological claims are intelligible. John Paul II in his famous encyclical *Fides et Ratio* uses a picture and characterizes faith and reason as two wings, which the same being uses and which help him to ascend to the contemplation of truth. He says,

Faith and Reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth – in a word, to know himself – so that, by knowing and

¹²⁸ Alice von Hildebrand *op. cit.* 55.

¹²⁹ See Plato, *Euthudemus*, 279c, or see also Plato, *Republic*, 7.525 c, where the term *metastrophé* is used.

loving God, men and woman may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves.¹³⁰

John Paul II thus softens the often exaggerated distinction between faith and reason and denies an irreconcilable chasm between them. The reason for this is to reaffirm that reason as well as faith have the very same object, namely, divine reality. This, however, means that reason is also able to ascend to that, which is tremendously important, or let's say, what is the most important both in itself and for man. The meaning of the notion of faith (*fides*) in the document corresponds to an act of belief, which is a personal decision committed to the Ultimate Reality and Truth. Similarly, reason (*ratio*) means reasoning analytically, being able to conceive, whereas intellect (*intellectus*) is the capacity of interiorizing, grasping synthetically. In this context faith is not something that is added from the outside to reason, but belongs essentially to the faculty of human cognition. In this sense one might apply all the observations we made concerning the intellect in the previous sections. Moreover, if we say that faith is a radical answer to the holiness of God, because God is a radically other object of faith than any other objects of belief in its everyday sense, then we can also say only here that we deliver ourselves in the full sense of the term to the object of faith. This delivering, however, has an incomparably higher value than delivering ourselves, as in the common type of belief we have mentioned, to the essentially unknown principles of physics and the like. Similarly, but far more properly so, in the case of the religious type of faith one can be open subjecting oneself to the object of faith. To believe in something means to lose and to subject oneself, and since in this type of faith the object is incomparably higher and eminent than in any other kinds of belief, man's openness in religious faith gains an incomparably deeper meaning.

There are, however, instances when man is closed in certain acts of faith. In this context, under the label closedness I understand religious acts, religious manifestations, in

¹³⁰ John Paul II., *Fides et Ratio*, Introduction. http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0216/_P1.HTM (last retrieve: 03.01.2010.)

which man doesn't have or has limited freedom and his particular belief or faith blocks man's natural yearning for the ultimate reality. My question here refers to the complete opposite of our principal investigation, namely openness. In order to understand openness better, I want to investigate its opposite: I want to know when man is closed in faith: under what circumstances can faith be considered a closed system?

In the first sense, an act of faith has to be considered closed when its object is not a proper object of a faith, that is, when its object blocks man. It can happen, for example, when man believes in things that are finite but are treated as if they were God, in other words when he believes in idols. There can be many finite things, ideas that can be – in a final analysis – false object of a false faith. I think, however, that from a strictly philosophical point of view, non-personal, non-living beings cannot be objects of faith *in* nor objects of adoration, and certainly not proper objects of adoration.¹³¹ The proper object of the adoration can only be a personal being. Now, if one adores a non-personal being, such as a tree,¹³² then one is browbeaten into the narrow content and context of a belief in and worship of non-personal deities and idols, and hence fails to see many aspects of a faith springing from an encounter with a personal, perfect being.

There are numerous other things that can be improper objects of faith. In the case of some, it is obvious that they are assumed objects of faith, in the case of others it is not. In the case of the Satanism, for example, it is more or less obvious, that, because of its object, it not only closes man into a limited and overly simplified system, but into an evil world and may even prompt him to murder others and to commit suicide putting an end to many persons and conceivably to the whole world. On the other hand, however, in the case of an everyday “materialist”, who regards his money almost like a deity (he deifies money), it is really hard

¹³¹ From the viewpoint of religious studies (which is neither philosophy of religion, nor theology), which investigates religious phenomena independently of their truth-claims, also non-living beings can be objects of adoration and veneration.

¹³² As it is in the case of many Middle-Asian religions. They adore trees, fountains, stones, etc.

to tell whether what he does is a religious act or not. According to some scholars, however, it is. It is a secularized form of religion as for example varied types of atheisms and idol-worship are. Max Scheler – as we have remarked already in this chapter – called this kind of installment of a finite good, an idol in place of God.¹³³

Contemporary religious studies, since they try to avoid making utterances concerning the truth of statements, claim that in modern societies even shopping customs can be considered as a form of religion.¹³⁴ From the very beginning, religious scholars have been raising questions about the common ground on which representatives of various approaches in the scientific study of religions could meet. Discussions have revolved particularly around conceptual frameworks that could be used to delineate the underlying structures of knowledge that justify the cross-cultural use of the notion ‘religion’. In order to theorize and analyze the variegated forms of religious representations and to identify the quality that makes them a member in the category of ‘religion’, scholars need to entertain a shared understanding of the corporate intelligence on which their knowledge about religious issues is based. Philosophy, however, is not interested in a “common ground”, but revolves around the true solutions to problems. From a philosophical point of view – since the present work intends to be philosophical – we have to say that not all forms of religious representations, manifestations and phenomena can rightfully claim the label of religion. Since philosophy concentrates on the truth of things and not on the mere empirical manifestations of things, as they actually are, virtually or in whatever form, present to us (as for example religious study does), we can apply value-judgments, that is, we can, and we have to treat some forms of faith and religious manifestations as pseudo or semi forms and some forms as real forms of faith and religion. In

¹³³ See Max Scheler, *Op. cit.* 267

¹³⁴ Contemporary religious studies investigate religious phenomena, which, according to the classics of religious studies, such as Rudolf Otto, Gerardus van der Leeuw and Mircea Eliade have not much in common with the original categories of the field. For Otto and Eliade the essence of religion is the presence of the sacred, whereas modern authors talk about desacralized religion and desacralized forms of religiosity. To the contemporary movements of religious studies see Pyysiäinen, Ilkka - Anttonen, Veikko (eds.): *Current Approaches in the Cognitive Science of Religion*. London: Continuum, 2002.

the case of the man above, who handles the money in an inappropriate form and the money becomes the highest object of his adoration and the highest criterion, it is clear that it is not an authentic form of religious worship or belief. The essential transcendent extrawordliness of the religious act is here absent.

The same can be said about our other example concerning the adoration of the tree. In the case of the tree, since it is a particular and finite as well as low being that poses as object of religious acts, it is also an internally contradictory and false object of a “divine tree” and to engage in such an idol-worship likewise results in a closedness into, and a closedness of the person in consequence of, such a “faith”. These faiths instead of making a contribution to liberate and perfect man do not conduce to the development of the personality of man. Normally faith helps man to overcome the difficulties of life, helps to find the right way as well as opens totally new dimensions for man, even though the value and truth-claims of religion can never, with Lübke and others, be reduced to such effects on human existence.¹³⁵ It was Thomas Aquinas who said, referring to the self-transcending character of faith, that even if we can have only a small piece of knowledge of the divine, this is of incomparably higher value than any most certain and complete knowledge of lesser and worldly objects.¹³⁶ He says at another passage: “Therefore, although the human reason cannot grasp fully the truths that are above it, yet, if it somehow holds these truths at least by faith, it acquires great perfection for itself.”¹³⁷ Faith, insofar as it has a proper object, invigorates and maintains man's original freedom. False objects of faith, in contrast to proper objects, close man's

¹³⁵ See Hermann Lübke, *Religion nach der Aufklärung* (Graz: Styria, 1986): See for a critique of this view Robert Spaemann, „Die Frage nach der Bedeutung des Wortes ‚Gott‘“, in: *Communio* 1 (1972), S. 54-72, wiederabgedruckt in: R. Spaemann, *Einsprüche* (Einsiedeln: Johannes-Verlag, 1977), S. 13-35; see also Josef Seifert, “Person, Religiöser Glaube und Wahrheit. Philosophische Analysen und kritische Reflexionen über Ludwig Wittgensteins Religionsphilosophie”, in: Wilhelm Lütterfelds/Thomas Mohrs (Hrsg.), *Globales Ethos. Wittgensteins Sprachspiele interkultureller Moral und Religion*, (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000), pp. 176-204; and the same author, *Der Streit um die Wahrheit. Wahrheit und Wahrheitstheorien. De Veritate – Über die Wahrheit*, Bd. II/The Fight about Truth. Truth and Truth Theories (Frankfurt / Paris / New Brunswick: 2009).

¹³⁶ “Nevertheless, as Aristotle observes, the smallest inkling of the highest matters is more desirable than certain knowledge of the least important matters.” Saint Thomas Aquinas: *Summa Theologiae* I.q.1,art. 5, resp.

¹³⁷ *Summa contra Gentiles* I. 5.

striving toward the truth. In this sense, the object itself also can be considered as something that can block man, artificially precluding him from realizing his own essence.

To sum up we can say that there are basically three senses in which we can say that a faith is closed. Firstly, closedness can come not from the object or content of a religion, but from false human interpretations of it. In the case of religious fanatics, who think, for example, that beheading of someone being of another religion is justified, or in the case of the pharisaic practice of a religion, not the teaching of the religion is closed to the world and reality, but its interpretation. In the second sense the object of a religion is closed to truth. It means the replacement of the true “objects” of a religion by idols or other finite beings. If money, someone’s bodily appearance, war or warriors, are idolized, even if they will not be adored, they still are idols and are false “absolute goods”; consequently, these idols are closing the mind of the idol-worshipper to truth and to the world. “Worshipping” a finite good or being one gets closed and narrowed and not freed and fulfilled and opened. There are other extreme examples which clearly show that the idolization and absolutization of finite goods or even of evils doesn’t lead to the amelioration, purification and sanctification (which would be the objective of a religion) of the “believer”, but many times will lead to his or her illness and religious monomania. Thirdly, there are less extreme forms of closedness in religion, when, for example, one is not committed to his or her religion inasmuch as the religion would require. Also the narrow kind of practicing of a religion or the arbitrary selection and application of certain dogmas of a religion disregarding its whole context are examples when distorted objects of the faith close man.

Now, in the light of this brief discussion on the openness of different attitudes and acts of the human being what conclusions can we draw with reference to the phenomenon of world-openness? First of all it seems that world-openness constitutes an essential component of the human being and therefore differs from “world-openness” as an attitude.

Openness as an attitude, on the other hand, in its most profound sense, seems to be a fundamental attitude preceding all other specific attitudes of openness, the most basic attitude, which engenders other good attitudes, as I hold against my thesis director who holds that “openness” is too vague and abstract a term to designate the most fundamental moral or other attitude, and that we encounter openness (and this in extremely different senses) much rather as a consequence or as an element of other attitudes. In spite of this I hold that there are instances where world-openness cannot be considered as a primary datum. There are cases where openness is the consequence of other attitudes. There are instances where world-openness is only a derivative phenomenon. We cannot say, for example, that fundamental moral attitudes are identical in respect of their origin with world-openness, since openness is not enough to characterize all attitudes (even if one can find the characteristic of openness in all attitudes). We cannot say with full justification that all attitudes, volitional and intellectual acts in man, are nothing but openness. Rather, we can say that there are attitudes, acts, and manifestations of the human being with the characteristic of openness.

2.4. The ultimate Understanding of World-Openness as God-directedness

In this chapter I shall give a brief overview on the issue that I call the most comprehensive understanding of world-openness. Insights of this chapter are based on the understandings gained in our previous investigations on the preliminary meaning of world-openness, its understanding according to Max Scheler¹³⁸ and its different aspects in the human being. We have distilled before out of the complex notion of “*world-openness*” the moment of “openness” as such as the deepest core of what makes “world-openness” in its different senses so important for understanding the human person and at the same time, as we saw with Max Scheler from the phenomenology of religious acts, as an openness that reaches essentially above and beyond the world. Thus the world-openness, by being openness, includes an openness to what is not identical with the world. This chapter intends to answer only one question: why is it philosophically more meaningful to argue for the understanding of the phenomenon of openness as God-directedness, and why are other interpretations less authentic? My thesis is that world-openness interpreted as including God-directedness has incomparably more profound implications than any other explanation. In other words, openness as God-directedness is the full philosophical understanding of the phenomenon.

This chapter is also dedicated to the elucidation of the problem of the relation of man’s world-openness and God-directedness. For the same phenomenon I use the term God-directedness equated with God-openness in this thesis. It would be reasonable, however, to apply the expression of God-openness instead of God-directedness. Still, I think that the term God-directedness to a certain extent is more expressive, since it reflects also the dynamism of man’s ontological status. The term, God-openness, grammatically speaking, seems to set and define the aim of a more general human characteristic, i.e., openness. Insofar as we conceive

¹³⁸ We presented and interpreted his most important text on the phenomenon of world-openness in chapter 2.2.

man as a creature being on the way to God, we also have to emphasize and denote by this term that God is his eternal companion on the way and not only an extrinsic object.¹³⁹ Concerning this issue, since there is not a huge difference between the two expressions, I think that it is the context that defines which expression is more appropriate.

Now, we have to answer the question of why we hold that God-openness is the most comprehensive understanding of world-openness or, more precisely, of the moment of openness it is characterized by and the moment of the love of the truth about the world which leads us beyond the world.

First of all, if we conceive world-openness as a peculiar, fundamental characteristic of man by which he can initiate and pursue acts, emotions, intellectual or volitional acts, etc., by which man relates to the world, then the proper determination of the possible object of the openness does seem to be a philosophically meaningful enterprise. Openness, however, always “searches” for the widest context that it can refer to. It means that openness calls for a meaningful context which provides a sufficient explanation for itself. It's clear that worldly, particular entities cannot be regarded as contexts in the widest sense. On the other hand, if we hold that the divine reality exists – for example on grounds of the Anselmian argument from the “definition”: *quo maius cogitari nequit*, or on other grounds – and if we also hold that in man there is a deep metaphysical ordination to see and know God (*conatus*, *Eros*), then we can immediately recognize that man's ordination (*Hinordnung*), prior to all experiences, had already comprised the divine reality as its possible “object”.

So in the first place I would say that our experiences show in man a constant self-deficiency (deficiency of his biological organization in comparison with animals, his

¹³⁹ In the religious literature God's eternal companion is beautifully expressed by the Psalmist: „The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, [...] Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me;” Psalm 23,1-2,4

intellectual and spiritual unsatisfaction, etc.), which is in need of an explanation: we have to postulate that the final explanation of his self-deficiency is a non-worldly reality.

This view is acceptable also for non-believers, since it proceeds from the phenomenon of world-openness and not from the existence of God.¹⁴⁰ Theoretically also an atheist can conceive divine reality as the widest context for the phenomenon of openness. But it is also acceptable for those who have a restricted notion of world. Being open to the physical world, for example, can explain a lot of things, but there are so many aspects of openness in man (and also in non-rational beings) that a simple physical, three-dimensional world as one single object cannot explain and cannot satisfy.¹⁴¹

One might say, however, that the phenomenon of world-openness is exclusively a worldly phenomenon and that it simply makes no sense to introduce any kind of religious explanation of it. Some might claim that introducing the notion of God and all kinds of religious implications just darkens the crystal clear construction of philosophy. On the other hand, others say that arguments for the existence of God, including, for example, the Anselmian ontological argument, are not essential requirements for a religious belief, since it cannot evoke (just urge) free human assent, which – in the final analysis – can be the beginning of a personal faith. There is, however, another explanation. This view sees the act of ultimate religious assent and the rational acceptance of the idea of God as organically linked. This view says that there is no strict border between philosophy and theology, that is, between the notional and the real assent of the notion of God. Philosophy and philosophical

¹⁴⁰ I think we have to take seriously Anselm's central figure in his "Proslogion": the character of the fool (*insipiens*). The fool is neither atheist nor a man of neutral position in the question of God; the fool simply doesn't know anything. The fool is, in my interpretation, insane, literally doesn't know anything. The fool is not only unconscious or ignorant concerning issues of God, or in other words, blind for God – such as one can be blind for colors or for values –, but, as a matter of fact, he is not in contact with reality. He left this world, he is now in another world, therefore, and only in this sense can he say, that there is no God. (Or, as G. K. Chesterton says, the madman one is not the one who lost his mind, but still possesses everything, but the one who lost everything but the mind.) The idea behind this insight is that the real existence of God is undeniably manifest not only from the notional assent of the notion of God, but from the world itself. This insight says that there is one supreme knowledge, which is undeniable: the existence of God.

¹⁴¹ See chapter 3.4.

insights such as the ontological argument¹⁴² can not only support faith, but ground and precede faith. Philosophy in this sense is not only an *ancilla theologiae*, but it is its fellow: *socia theologiae*.¹⁴³ This view however is not a novum at all in the history of thinking; moreover, it has been always present mostly in the Catholic tradition. According to this view, also the implicit faith of an atheist or non-believer has in itself a deep religious value and significance, which can lead to explicit faith.¹⁴⁴ In this sense, a religious explanation of the phenomenon of world-openness might be conceptually reasonable and acceptable also for an atheist. Consequently, when we speak about world-openness as God-directedness, we do not theologize.

Secondly, based on our previous insights, we can say that genuine openness belongs intrinsically to persons.¹⁴⁵ It is only a human person who can perform it and can be open in the full sense of the word. On the one hand, the phenomenon that we usually call world-openness in its full sense can refer to something insofar as its “object” is a person. Since openness is an utterly human, personal characteristic, its final object, the ultimate answer and meaning-providing, has to be also of personal nature. Now, at least three world religions in principle consider the supreme divine being as person (according to some interpretations – which I cannot accept – even Buddhism believes in the personal existence of the Supreme Being). It seems therefore, that it is philosophically meaningful to argue for the interpretation of world-openness as God-directedness.

Thirdly, if we consider world-openness as an attitude, then the object of it, beyond the metaphysical, is also the divine reality. In this context we use the word attitude in the sense of

¹⁴² In my view, Anselm’s ontological argument’s starting point is a purely philosophical one.

¹⁴³ See for example the main intention of the papal encyclical *Fides et Ratio* (Chapter 77.) or book of Balázs Mezei: *Vallás és hagyomány. (Religion and Tradition)* Budapest: L’Harmattan, 2003: 28. If I am not mistaken, professor Mezei applies for the very first time *expressis verbis* the expression of *socia theologiae*.

¹⁴⁴ According to John Hick and to the majority of Protestant thinkers notional, conceptual assent has no or little positive religious value. It is however not surprising, since in Protestantism the doctrine of *fides* (faith) has been prevailing from its inception. See: Hick, John: *The Existence of God*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1977: 18.

¹⁴⁵ In the chapter 2.1. I have made it clear why is world-openness more applicable to human beings than angels or God.

philosophical attitude. The philosophical attitude in its everyday sense is a particular way of seeing the state of affairs of life. In this sense, the philosophical attitude is a universal mode of explaining the phenomena of the world in their most general modus. There are however other definitions of the philosophical attitude. I think that the most appropriate and original one is Max Scheler's understanding. Scheler holds that the philosophical attitude is possible only for absolutely precious regions of being and value, where entities and values form self-contained, self-consistent realms.¹⁴⁶ For Scheler, the philosophical attitude is “an act through which a constitutional bond of human nature should be burst asunder and a veil that conceals Being lifted from the eye of the mind.”¹⁴⁷ In another place he gives a further definition of the philosophical attitude: “a love-determined movement of the inmost personal self of a finite being toward participation in the essential reality of all possible.”¹⁴⁸ A person is of a philosophical attitude insofar as he intrinsically possesses competence for problems and fields that correspond to the entirety of the world. It means that true philosophy and a true philosophical attitude are defined by the genuineness (the manner of regarding things) of a person's relation to things. In this context, genuineness concerns the highest, ultimate and in-itself-precious object. The ultimate object of openness as attitude receives its full meaning if we conceive it as a personal, ultimate entity, otherwise the original meaning of participation and love (from the part of man) is distorted. Therefore in order to fulfill the claim of the “love-determined movement of the inmost personal self” and “participation” we must suppose that the final object and context of openness as attitude is the divine reality.

Fourthly, if world-openness is a capacity of man then its extension towards God, that is, its understanding as a capacity for God seems to be philosophically acceptable. The expression *capax dei* was used by Thomas Aquinas, who adopted it from Augustine's “De

¹⁴⁶ See Max Scheler, *On the Eternal in Man*, Hamden: Archon Books, 1972: 71.

¹⁴⁷ Max Scheler, *op. cit.* 73.

¹⁴⁸ Max Scheler, *op. cit.* 74.

Trinitate”.¹⁴⁹ Nevertheless, they both used the term in the sense that man is designed to know and love God and held that this capacity is primarily intellectual. By virtue of the intellect, man is able to be in touch, communicate – in the widest sense of the word – with other creatures as well as with God. Human beings are *capax Dei*, that is, purely naturally speaking of gaining a fundamental knowledge of God through our reason and to love, thank and worship Him, to perceive His voice in our conscience. *Capax Dei* means that God created man in His likeness and endowed him with the capacity to know Him as well as the world and other creatures. Theologically speaking, and in Saint Augustine as well as in the Christian tradition, that we are *capax Dei* means that we have the capacity to see God eternally in a beatific vision in paradise, to become one with Him in love and in being loved by Him, and to receive, and participate in, God’s own divine life in grace and the sacraments. *Capax Dei* does not mean that we are identical with God, only a kind of participation in the divine nature, for example, by grace. Nevertheless, *capax Dei* signifies – in a very radical way – man’s ultimate goal of his being. Now, if we conceive world-openness as capacity, we have to ask what kind of capacities there are and the reason why openness as God-openness has a deeper philosophical meaning than any other capacities in man’s existence.

Capacities, being of whatever kind, can have objects, means, directions, etc. For example, the capacity of driving a car has certainly an object which is the good and safe driving. In the context of driving, openness’ direction and aim is in connection only with driving. That is, if I am able to drive a car, in the capacity of driving I am open to the means, objects and ends of driving. In this sense, being open in driving a car means openness to affairs of driving, that is, keeping one’s eyes on the road, shifting the gear in time, etc., etc. These objects, however, are finite. Having, however, the capacity to be open to the world,¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Augustine’s XIV De Trinitate 8: “*eo ipso quod facta est ad imaginem Dei, capax est Dei per gratiam.*” Thomas Aquinas’ Sth I-II 113.10co and Sth III 4.1.ra2: “*similitudo imaginis attenditur in natura humana secundum quod est capax Dei, scilicet ipsum attingendo propria operatione cognitionis et amoris.*”

¹⁵⁰ Of course, it is the very first insight of any anthropology that man is open to the world.

the real object of this openness must be something higher, non-particular, infinite and something sublime in the sense of comprising the totality of openness' possible scope.

To sum up we can say, that, either way we define world-openness, the theistic interpretation is the only proper understanding of the experience of man's infinity in openness. Now, the conclusion of our investigations on different aspects in which man can be open (in each case the main question concerned the true meaning and proper object of these opennesses) is that it seems that man is in need of certain conditions of life as well as something infinite. The only proper answer to man's constant self-deficiency and strivings is that there exists a world-transcending vis-à-vis. If we concede that God is the ultimate object of man's openness we do not do anything else but giving a reasonable answer to our absolutely world-transcending desires, volitional acts, demands, questions, questionings, concerns, etc.

This, however, does not mean that we identify the world with God. In the understanding of man's world-openness if we really want to identify the "world" (that is, man's vocation) of man, by the expression "world as God" we mean that the nature of the world in respect to man's openness has an incomparably higher quality and comprehensibility than in the case of animals whose world is their surroundings. Man's world is neither his surroundings, nor his cultural, linguistic, social world, but the divine milieu.

We have arrived to the conclusion of this section that man's world-openness' final understanding is man's openness to God. In this sense, however, God-openness is the real condition of man's world-openness. The negation of man's openness to the divine reality would mean an illicit reduction of man's primary vocation and would conclude in a distorted view of the human person. All those who hold that man is open only to the social world (in other words, man is an *animal sociale*) or man is open only to the physical, visible reality (*animal materiale*) misunderstand the phenomenon of man's world-openness. Instead of false

and reduced interpretations I say that man, in his openness, is ordained to the world-transcendent vis-à-vis. The full understanding of man's world-openness is found therefore in the divine milieu. We cannot thematize our world-openness without the thematization of our original God-openness. From what we have seen, thus far, it is evident that, on the one hand, God-openness is a most fundamental characteristic of the human being, and, on the other, that it is in no way just of practical importance to enable us to reach real world-openness. In this sense man is not in the first place a being characterized by world-openness but a being ordained to the world-transcendent absolute being and the supreme and living reality which is infinitely more than and different from the reduced and contingent world.

Finally, answering the principal question of this chapter we can add that a purely biological and physical (and other as a matter of fact incompetent theoretical frameworks) understanding of the human person also presupposes the reality of the personal vis-à-vis, the Supreme Being. Biology and physicalism cannot explain man's world-shaping character, which doesn't stop at biological and physical borders. This world-shaping character of man clearly shows that man's primary vocation exceeds his biological, social and cultural structure. In other words, one cannot understand man's biological, social, cultural, etc., concerns without presupposing his preliminary ability to transcend all these phenomena. This is the phenomenon that theology expresses like this: God is the real condition of man's concerns. But, as I said earlier in this chapter, here we must not do theology.

2.5. Being-in-the-world and World-Openness

The aim of this chapter is to define the relation between being-in-the-world and world-openness. In respect of our investigation this comparison is useful because one might easily confuse different phenomena which in fact bear only minor resemblance. The aim of this chapter is to tell what the notion of being-in-the-world is, and what its relation to the phenomenon of man's world-openness is. In this chapter we deal with a concept which is apparently similar to world-openness. The focus, however, of our investigation is the phenomenon of man's world-openness. Now, an appropriate delimitation and definition of the notion of being-in-the-world will help us to see what the world-openness is not. This methodological "trick" therefore helps us to get closer to what the true meaning of world-openness is.

One might challenge the importance of the notion of being-in-the-world in respect of our thesis. Before answering the question and contrasting the two notions, we have to apprehend the anthropological significance of the notion of being-in-the-world. By way of introduction we can say, however, that both concepts portray man as world-bound being. Secondly, both concepts affirm man's original relation to the world. Thirdly, both concepts constitute the foundation of an anthropological investigation. Fourthly, both concepts define man's place in the world. And fifthly, both concepts identify the direction of man's openness. Being-in-the-world and world-openness are similar concepts in many respects, but in the last two points they clearly differ. The similarity suggests that in an analysis on world-openness we have to pay attention to the idea of being-in-the-world. In this chapter, I would like to know in what sense they differ. Nevertheless, this chapter is not only a comparison of two concepts, but a valid approach to the real phenomenon of world-openness, since with every clearly expressed differentiation, clarification and delimitation we are closer to the phenomenon.

Being-in-the-world (*in-der-Welt-sein*) is a central category in Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*. Even if the Heideggerian path is strange sometimes and differs from the mainstream philosophical traditions, it serves our purpose to conceive the Heideggerian project as a real philosophical enterprise of re-defining the proper place of human being in the world. Since Heidegger's system is an organic whole, where parts belonging to different scientific areas are inseparable, we have to discuss here ontological issues along with ethical and anthropological ones.

Historical questions are not always philosophically significant. The presentation of Heidegger's anthropological views would be an intellectually interesting, but finally insignificant enterprise in respect of the theme of the essay. The presentation of the foundation of anthropology and ethics, and providing Heidegger's thought as a framework for this foundation, is not only intellectually-philosophically interesting, but also philosophically significant.

In this chapter, I therefore make use of Heidegger and his insights as an example. It also means that this section is not (exclusively) on Martin Heidegger as one single person in the history of philosophy, but on a real philosophical topic. The reader might ask: why Heidegger and not someone else? My answer is that I consider Heidegger a unique thinker, whose main concerns – among others – were anthropology and ethics, even if he denied doing anthropology or ethics. It is precisely this denial which makes his thoughts interesting, and demonstrates the unique character of his philosophy; this disagreement makes his philosophy a controversial, but useful example.

Heidegger's main focus is not the single act of the human being and its evaluation, but what utterly human is. His ontology's main problem is the humanity of the human being. This kind of anthropology approaches human beings from a very broad perspective. Nevertheless, I think, it is still anthropology – even if Heidegger denied the possibility of doing anthropology

– and not simply a thinking (*das Denken*) or world-view (*Weltanschauung*) deprived from all important contents and considerations, what we traditionally call ethical content and ethical importance. These ethical considerations are, as a matter of fact, very close to anthropology; the whole system (this kind of ethics) of Heidegger can therefore be considered as a rather anthropological approach.

We will proceed as follows: firstly, I shall provide a brief introduction to Heidegger's main thoughts on anthropology. Secondly, I will place in this context his views on being-in-the-world, that is, I will investigate his path from ontology to fundamental ontology. And finally, I will compare being-in-the-world to my understanding of world-openness.

I have to start with a remark though: it is simply impossible to provide a brief introduction to the main thoughts of Martin Heidegger. The reason I try to provide a short summary is that I consider the whole Heideggerian oeuvre as a continuing search for foundations and in this sense the main idea of his project bears a certain resemblance to ours. The idea of questioning, and as a matter of fact – as he referred to it – “destruction”, led Heidegger from theology to philosophy, from ontology to fundamental ontology, and finally, from fundamental ontology to the dedicated study of the existential structure of human being. One might immediately say that this is a very strange path. Independently of any reading of this path, however, I suppose that if we want to find the traces of anthropology, we have to start with his ontology.

It would be over-simple to say that Heidegger's philosophy is a hidden anthropology in every respect. As a matter of fact it is, but there is one thing that we cannot deny studying Heidegger's views: his main concern (*Sorge*) is always the very essence of human being. As he says:

But, now, is there not in this claim upon man, is there not in this attempt to prepare man for this claim upon him something to be said for man? Where

else does “regret”¹⁵¹ lead than in the direction of bringing man back again to his essence? What does this mean except that man (*homo*) becomes human (*humanus*)?¹⁵²

Both human being (humanity) and ontology are at risk – says Heidegger. We can take for granted, that the crisis of ontology is the primary cause of the crisis of human being. For Heidegger both ontology and phenomenology stand in the sense of philosophy, but while the former has its object, the latter has its method. Ontology, that is, raising the issue of being, points to the existential analytic. In this sense, Heidegger’s study is of a specific type of being, the human being. Now, his phenomenological analysis and description start not from the view of what is given in experience, but from the understanding, which belongs essentially to the *Dasein*. Ontologically it means that it starts from the (self-)understanding of being (*Seinsverständnis*), in other words, its beginning is the fact that *Dasein*, encountering real things in real life, understands those data – and (world-)life itself – through a preliminary understanding and correlation.

Now, the understanding of being, which would be in principle “ontologically” closest to the *Dasein* (and not only to the *concept* of *Dasein*, since here we talk about concrete human beings, the actually existing beings), is not that simple.

But Being ‘is’ only in the understanding of those entities to whose Being something like an understanding of Being belongs. Hence Being can be something unconceptualized, but it never completely fails to be understood. In ontological problematics *Being and truth* have, from the immemorial, been brought together if not entirely identified. This is evidence that there is a necessary connection between Being and understanding, even if it may perhaps be hidden in its primordial grounds.¹⁵³

For Heidegger the most important problem of all time is the question of being, he claims that the history of philosophy, and as matter of fact philosophy itself, has forgotten the

¹⁵¹ I think “concern” (“care” is widely accepted) would be a more precise translation for the original German word “Sorge”. Cf. Paul Tillich’s term the “ultimate concern”.

¹⁵² Heidegger, Martin: *Letter on Humanism*. (Trans. Miles Groth)

www.wagner.edu/departments/psychology/filestore2/download/101/MartinHeideggerLETTER_ON_HUMANISM.pdf p. 5. (last retrieve 01.07.2009.)

¹⁵³ Heidegger, Martin: *Being and Time*. (Trans. John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson) New York and Evanston: Harper & Row, 1962: 228. Or see the famous closing words of his “*Über das Wesen der Wahrheit*”: “das Wesen der Wahrheit ist die Wahrheit des Wesens.”

question of being from the time of Plato on. The rehabilitation of philosophy therefore consists in a genuine turning around, turning towards the real object of thinking. With this philosophical turning around – remaining within the framework of the philosophical gesture of searching for foundations –, I think, we have arrived with Heidegger to the field of anthropology.

The question of being, however, is always the question of the existing human being, of the *Dasein*. Heidegger's main concern, that is, his fundamental ontology, is to be found in the existential analytic. Consequently, fundamental ontology investigates the existential structure of human being. According to Heidegger, anxiety comes from one's own indefinite existence. Fear comes from external sources, whereas anxiety comes to us from nowhere, but belongs essentially to man. Anxiety is concerned with our "thrownness in the world", that is, with "being-in-the-world". Anxiety is a peculiar way in which man becomes aware of his situation in the world. For Heidegger this world, as anxiety reveals it, is an alienated, not-home-like world. We must add that this conception of the world is in a certain sense pessimistic, rather than optimistic. For Heidegger, in his deep and formidable world, anxiety reveals to us that no individual can escape from death. In this sense man is indeed open to death (at least in the sense that he is aware of and cannot escape death); man is according to Heidegger, a "*Sein zum Tode*," a "being-towards (or "for")-death", but Heidegger doesn't say anything about other objects of man's openness.

Heidegger's phenomenology of life can be conceived as dissociation from the phenomenology of mind, that is, from Husserl and from the psychologically burdened phenomenology in general. It is an undeniable fact that for Heidegger temporality was of highest importance. If the *Dasein*'s being is thoroughly temporal, then all of human awareness is conditioned by this temporality, including one's understanding of being. Therefore, according to Heidegger, temporality belongs to the very essence of

phenomenology, but without a minimum realism in the background, I think, the notion of temporality would be no more than an expression of Heidegger's sensitivity to everyday life. One can observe this in his example with the hammer in the "Being and Time".¹⁵⁴ Without realist explanation we cannot understand this overwhelmingly everyday example, which shows the "genuine positivism" of his phenomenology.¹⁵⁵

Heidegger lays immense stress upon temporality. This feature is the clue to understand his position in philosophy. His pathway from ontology to fundamental ontology, his analysis of the temporality of the *Dasein* for the re-establishment of the very meaning of being, can be called, in my view that might apparently contradict Heidegger's own self-interpretation, a realist enterprise, and can rightly be called a realist phenomenological approach.¹⁵⁶ The

¹⁵⁴ Heidegger, Martin: *Being and Time*. (Trans. John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson) New York and Evanston: Harper & Row, 1962: 98-99.

¹⁵⁵ With the relation of the concepts of temporality and realism I wanted to affirm that if there is a philosophical tradition called realist phenomenology, Heidegger would certainly belong to this tradition, while other interpreters (such as Josef Seifert) see his phenomenology as a confused form of subjectivism that denies any distinction between realism and idealism, thereby placing itself in a tradition of radical transcendental subjectivism that sees both being and truth entirely dependent on *Dasein* (man). (See on this Josef Seifert, „Die verschiedenen Bedeutungen von ‘Sein’ - Dietrich von Hildebrand als Metaphysiker und Martin Heideggers Vorwurf der Seinsvergessenheit“, in: Balduin Schwarz, hrsg., *Wahrheit, Wert und Sein. Festgabe für Dietrich von Hildebrand zum 80. Geburtstag* (Regensburg: Habbel, 1970), pp. 301-332. or by the same author: *Wahrheit und Person. Vom Wesen der Seinswahrheit, Erkenntniswahrheit und Urteilstwahrheit. De veritate – Über die Wahrheit* Bd. I (Frankfurt / Paris / Ebikon / Lancaster / New Brunswick: Ontos-Verlag, 2008), ch. 2. See also Josef Seifert, *Der Streit um die Wahrheit. Wahrheit und Wahrheitstheorien. De Veritate – Über die Wahrheit*, De veritate – Über die Wahrheit: 2, Realistische Phänomenologie. Studies of the International Academy of Philosophy in the Principality of Liechtenstein and at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Bd. V (Frankfurt / Paris / New Brunswick: 2009), ch. 7-8.)

In my view however there are two main theses of "Being and Time": the *Dasein* is temporal and the meaning of being is time. If we conceive philosophical realism as a thought which says that things exist independently of us and the way in which we find out about them, and in the investigation of the temporality of *Dasein* we inevitably encounter the world in its temporally (really) defined objects, then we can say that the starting point of realist phenomenology and the analysis of the *Dasein* is the same: the phenomena of the real world as they are given to us in our experiences, where we know things as they are in themselves.

In the background of my observation there is a presupposition, that there is a so-called *phenomenological minimum*. Under the headlines of phenomenological minimum I understand the original and common ideas of the whole phenomenological movement. I claim that there are certain common features, stressing points in each phenomenologist (in each phenomenology). Under phenomenological minimum I understand that the starting point, the usage of the method and the ultimate intention of the leading figures of the philosophy of phenomenology can be characterized as something common. With the adjective "original" I wanted to indicate that among the different phenomenological schools I presuppose a basic similarity, an original "idea", which gave rise to phenomenology.

¹⁵⁶ Even if he denied every realistic accusation: "...I still consider, as I did before, every form of the usual philosophical realism nonsensical in principle, no less so than that idealism which it sets itself up against in its arguments and which it 'refutes.' [Phenomenological reduction] is a piece of pure self-reflection, exhibiting the most original evident facts; moreover, if it brings into view in them the outlines of idealism [...] it is still anything but a party to the usual debates between idealism and realism."

significance of the turning to fundamental ontology¹⁵⁷ is for us to turn to the things themselves and to man as a phenomenon of high importance.

My thesis is that Heidegger's understanding of anthropology and his views on the place of man consist not in giving a special content to anthropology and similarly not in defining its proper method and placing it among other sciences, but in redefining its authentic connection to ontology.

"The Letter on Humanism" provides another occasion for Heidegger to explicate his views on anthropology and ethics. The main theme of the letter is humanism, how humanism degenerated from its ancient roots. In this essay Heidegger says – and we can consider it as a definition – that man is ontologically in the closeness of being.¹⁵⁸ Every other "metaphysical" definition of man – as he holds – fails to grasp the essence and place of humanism and man. Metaphysical definitions put man into the system of *differentia specifica* and *genus proximum*. Heidegger makes an exaggerated claim, he says all metaphysics of his epoch have a philosophically unacceptable vision of man. He says: "Metaphysics thinks man up from *animalitas* and does not think further on to his *humanitas*."¹⁵⁹ The dignity of man, that is his real *humanitas*, is to be found in the ek-static taking place in the midst of the truth of being.¹⁶⁰ Now, in the "Letter on Humanism" there are many other metaphors for defining man: man is "counterpart", "tender" of being (*Hirt des Seins*) and "next to being".¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷ Heidegger said once: "There is only one emergency exit for us: the phenomenology."

¹⁵⁸ See Martin Heidegger: *Letter on Humanism*. (Trans. Miles Groth)

www.wagner.edu/departments/psychology/filestore2/download/101/MartinHeideggerLETTER_ON_HUMANISM.pdf p. 5. (last retrieve 01.07.2009.)

¹⁵⁹ op. cit. 8. We must add as criticism that this view is false. In the *De Ente et Essentia*, for example, where Aquinas shows in what sense man is placed in the genus *animal*, in what sense man belongs to the realm of separate, immaterial substances, and in what sense *rationality* introduces what is properly human in us. And there are of course countless other examples, which defy the one-sided Heideggerian observation.

¹⁶⁰ In my view, however, in classical philosophy the dignity is ontological and previous to any ecstatic condition (fetuses and babies have dignity). Human dignity is previous to any conscious act and *a fortiori* to any ecstatic act. But, once man is mature, his or her dignity can be manifested in the ecstatic union with God and other human beings that we call love or charity. This rational love responds to the truth of being, precisely. But Heidegger gives a strange meaning to the word "truth", with which he departs from classical philosophy and from realism.

¹⁶¹ See Heidegger, op. cit. 23.

The issues of ethics are problematized within this context. When Heidegger tries to determine the relation between “ethics” and “ontology”, he presupposes, on the one hand, that we already know what ontology is, and on the other, that the value (originality) of a discipline is provided by its being in the nearness of the truth of being which thinking has to think.¹⁶² In his seminal essay he refers to the original meaning of the Greek word *ethos*. Now, according to the Heideggerian etymology *ethos* means “dwelling” or “dwelling place”. Dwelling therefore is a metaphor; its components are man, the act of dwelling and the place of dwelling. In short, ethics, the proper ethical “behavior” is a dwelling in the truth of being.

For Heidegger the introduction of the metaphor of dwelling as the translation of *ethos* is supposed to express that things around us are not completely strange, moreover, we must turn to these things in order to understand the exceptional position of man within the world. Heidegger comes to a conclusion and says that ethics as the study of *ethos* must ponder upon the dwelling of man. Consequently, in his view, ethics becomes identical with ontology. He says,

That thinking which thinks the truth of being as the primordial element of man is itself the original ethics. However this thinking is not ethics in the first instance, because it is ontology.¹⁶³

This new conception of ethics is again a re-formulation of fundamental ontology pointing to a more fundamental, more rigorous attitude, that Heidegger calls thinking (*das Denken*), which exceeds any conceptual attempt. This thinking is neither ethics in the traditional sense of the word, since it investigates it “only” as *ethos*: the dwelling of man at his proper place, but not as ontology, since it is more primordial than ontology. His final conclusion is that “this thinking is neither theoretical nor practical. It comes to pass before this differentiation has been made.”¹⁶⁴ The novelty of Heidegger’s project is obvious if we consider that he radically examined the foundations of metaphysics claiming that old

¹⁶² See Heidegger *op. cit.* 34.

¹⁶³ Heidegger *op. cit.* 36.

¹⁶⁴ Heidegger *op. cit.* 38.

differentiations, schemas, conceptual inventions of subjectivist metaphysics are less authentic than thinking on the truth of being.

Now, what did Heidegger mean by the notion of “being-in-the-world”? It is hard to answer this question, since according to this scheme we are also at loss as to what Heidegger meant by the notion of ‘world’. To the question “what world do we live in?” however Heidegger has two answers. Sometimes the world is an existential-ontological concept referring to the historical and cultural context in which the *Dasein* exists. Sometimes it is the concrete thing-world, the universe, the world around us with all its particular entities. Independently of the solution we accept, the world of *Dasein* is not something external and constitutes its inner makeup. With the term “being-in-the-world” Heidegger indicated the inseparability of man from the world, whatever he meant by this. The task of the philosopher, therefore, is to reveal the structure of “being-in-the-world” by the help of existential analysis. In other words, for Heidegger the world essentially belongs to man and man essentially belongs to the world. This view of Heidegger, however, can be interpreted by many realist phenomenologists as a profound subjectivism, idealism and relativism. His opponents say that his almost entire lack of philosophical sense for moral values (relativists never accept independent moral values and values in general) expanded on in his books on Nietzsche (he was more nietzschean than Nietzsche himself), and expressed also in his own life (both his Nazism and the scandalous letters that reveal his marital infidelity and a peculiar meanness of it).

For Heidegger “Being-in-the-world” means, first of all, the possibility of living an “authentic” life. It also means that man is ontologically related to the world and he is not an isolated self without any personal, socio-cultural, etc., relation as the Cartesian tradition held. Heidegger adds that our being is offered to one another, and introduces the notion of being-

with (*Mitsein*).¹⁶⁵ I can fully accept this view, since it expresses that man is always already involved in a shared world, that is, he is open to others and particular, finite things and – if I might to interpret his account in this way; even if many of his opponents would say that Heidegger was an atheist and showed disinterest in God – to the infinite. In this respect the vision of “being-in-the-world” might be understood being close to our understanding of world-openness. It is similar also in the sense that both concepts describe openness as subservience, that is, acquiescence of man’s real place in the world. There are, however, significant dissimilarities, and – as we will see it in the following pages – there is more dissimilarity than similarity.

Besides these similarities, there are significant dissimilarities between the two concepts. Firstly, the Heideggerian openness depicts man as being open to a world, which is not given once and for all. Heidegger’s world is “alienated” and “not-home-like”; it is almost an evil world, where men just roam about without any determinate direction and aim. A world which reveals itself to man exclusively in anxiety cannot be but dreadful.

Secondly – this is the main difference between the two concepts – in Heidegger’s understanding the openness of the “being-in-the-world” doesn’t set the course, his vision of man is – in my view – fallacious. The Heideggerian project therefore provides room for critique:

The transcendental approach turns against itself; instead of leading us to secure ground, it only gives greater urgency to the demand for such a ground and returns us to the question: what is man’s place?¹⁶⁶

What Heidegger proposes, namely the “essence of resoluteness (*Ent-schlossenheit*) lies in the opening (*Entborgenheit*) of human *Dasein* into the clearing of being” is

¹⁶⁵ See Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, New York: Harper and Row, 1962: 156.

¹⁶⁶ Harries, Karsten: *Fundamental Ontology and the Search for Man’s Place*. In: Murray, Michael (Ed.): *Heidegger and Modern Philosophy*. New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 1978: 66.

indefinite.¹⁶⁷ In my understanding, however, openness has a definite direction and object. Its highest object is the divine reality, which provides full intelligibility for openness. The openness of the Heideggerian man, as a matter of fact, does not exceed his own world, therefore his world and his existence does not have full justification. The openness of the Heideggerian man is a minimized openness; the view of man resulting from this is also reduced. In contrast to this I think that the real openness of man does not stop at the borders of man's cultural, personal or thing-world. In other words, man is not only a creature dwelling within the world having an access to the being, but as Max Scheler noticed, the human being's main characteristic is his "being-outside-the-world".¹⁶⁸ It means that man is the only being that can objectify all entities, space, time and things of the world, though this objectification must also have an intelligible source. This source, however, is not identical with the objects of the spirit's objectification, neither with the innermost part of the spirit; it must be "outside". World-openness of man means therefore that his capacity of objectification does not restrict man to be only "being-in-the-world", but calls for a more profound explanation. Our vision of man's openness has a different label: man is ontologically a being-outside-the-world. In contrast to the Heideggerian understanding we localize man's vocation, his "world" as something that exceeds the visible, physical, biological reality.

¹⁶⁷ See Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, New York: Harper and Row, 1962, 40.§. and 60.§. Or see Spiegelberg's interpretation. Spiegelberg says that Heidegger "maintained that even in *Sein und Zeit* existence meant the »openness of the human being, who stands open for the openness of Being« and that he »stands in this openness by enduring it« (*ausstehen*). A similar unacknowledged reinterpretation took place in the case of concern (*Sorge*), which is no longer confined to human being, but referred to being as such." Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement, A Historical Introduction*. The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1982: 418.

¹⁶⁸ See Max Scheler, *Man's Place in Nature*, New York: The Noonday Press, 1971. The main point of Scheler's work is that humans are not tantamount to "being-in-the-world" but being "outside" the world, because of his endless objectifications.

2.6. Openness of the non-living World and the organic, but non-spiritual World

There are two different phenomena which we would like to investigate here. Firstly, we would like to know, whether the inorganic, non-living world can be considered in some way to be open; and if it can, then in what sense. Secondly, we would like to know, whether organic beings, like animals and plants, can be considered open; and if they can, then what is the relation between human world-openness and organic, but non-spiritual openness. I discuss the problem of the inorganic and the organic, but non-spiritual life under the same headline, since in my view there is only a quantitative – and not a qualitative – difference between the inorganic and the organic, but non-spiritual worlds. The real qualitative difference lies between spiritual and non-spiritual, that is, between man and all other creatures of the world.

Within the phenomenological tradition Hedwig Conrad-Martius developed a comprehensive study on the philosophy of nature.¹⁶⁹ Her attitude can be characterized as an exceptional love for nature and she undertakes an attempt to establish an accord between new findings of scientific research and philosophical reflection on them. My starting point in the question of distinction between human, the non-living, and the non-personal organic world is similar to that of Conrad-Martius. She says that „the human being in his totality, s/he in his personal wholeness, can't say, want or do anything that does not come from the centre of himself (soul), in which his whole being is placed all in a time.”¹⁷⁰ In this respect she follows Max Scheler's view, who also stresses that human being is not a new stage, a „further step” in the alleged evolution of nature, but possesses an unparalleled feature, spirit (*Geist*), that no other creature possesses.¹⁷¹ Conrad-Martius accepts the classical distinction of inorganic and

¹⁶⁹ Hedwig Conrad-Martius, *Die Seele der Pflanze*. In: Conrad-Martius, *Schriften zur Philosophie* (ed.) Eberhard Avé-Lallement, Bd. 1 München: Kösel, 1963, pp. 276-362.

¹⁷⁰ Hedwig Conrad-Martius, *Metaphysische Gespräche*. Halle: 1921, 240. (My translation.)

¹⁷¹ See Max Scheler, *The Human Place in Nature*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2009. Here he says: “What makes the human being a »human« is not a new level of life – and it is certainly not just the *only* form in which life manifests itself: the »psyche«. The new principle is, first of all, *opposite anything we call life*,

living beings. She distinguishes inorganic entities (endowed with materiality), plants (endowed with dynamic nature), animals (with psychic features), and human beings (with mental capacities). I can fully accept (and this is the feature that I want to underline again and again) her view on the exceptional position of man within nature. Thanks to his specifically constituent element, spirit, man's being presents himself as a place where nature becomes self-aware. It means that within nature human being stands out. Following Conrad-Martius thoughts I go further and take a more strict position: I think that human being is so exceptional that comparisons, analogies with other branches of living beings, such as animals, simply don't work; and I also think that it would serve the purpose introducing new terms for "willing", "thinking", "affection", etc., of animals since animal activities are structurally dissimilar to seemingly corresponding human activities.

Usually we call something inorganic and non-living, which – using Aristotle's expression – is incapable of self-motion. According to Aristotle, self-motion is the indication of life. Nevertheless, Aristotle says that terrestrial natural bodies, like plants and animals as well as the sublunary elements (earth, air, water and fire) have a kind of circular motion. His train of thought argues that everything is in motion and exists for the sake of something.¹⁷² Inorganic entities can also move. This movement, however, differs from the organic one, which is, to a certain extent, self-generated and self-maintained movement. Non-living entities are incapable by definition of autonomous motion (including locomotion). The emphasis is laid here on the non-autonomous nature of non-living entities, which excludes self-motion, but allows motion. The final conclusion of Aristotle's thought is the proof for the existence of the first and divine mover, a topic we cannot pursue here any further. Instead, we return to our topic of the openness of non-human and non-personal beings.

including life in the human being: it is a genuinely new, essential fact which cannot be reduced to the »natural evolution of life« [...] Already the ancient Greeks asserted the existence of such a principle. They called it »reason«. We wish to suggest another and more comprehensive term for this X [...] this comprehensive term is »spirit«.” p. 26.

¹⁷² See Aristotle, *Physics* 14.

One might immediately say that non-living entities are open to the world, since they can move – even if this motion is not self-motion – and that they are not predestined to remain perpetually in the same form and position. In my view, however, this kind of motion, which cannot be compared to the motion of the organic, but non-spiritual life, does not necessitate that non-living entities should be open to some direction. The phenomenon of motion would require certain self-possession, knowledge concerning the direction of motion and possible conscious modification of it.¹⁷³ This is the motion what animals can have, but this is precisely that non-living entities do not possess. In case of non-living entities the total lack of freedom explains the lack of openness. If, however, we say that openness means a certain type of incompleteness or imperfection or variability or capacity of receiving new forms, then with certain reservations we can say that the non-living, inorganic world is also open but mean then with openness an entirely different phenomenon from the world-openness of the person, the kind of openness Aristotle ascribed chiefly to prime matter that is “open” to receive any form, a kind of total passivity and one that has nothing to do with spirit (even though Aristotle saw a certain analogy between prime matter that is open to receive any form and the intellect that is open to receive mentally any form and as such a *tabula rasa*).

In the inorganic world we also find a different kind of imperfection and incompleteness that involves an openness in relation to persons in relation to whom alone these entities achieve their proper value and perfection. For example, our solar system is beautiful in itself; it is a wonderful formation. In my view, however, in spite of all its beauty and magnificence, it is still incomplete in the sense that all beauties like this are made for man or at least for some personal being who alone can know and enjoy them. I think that without their relation to a person, the beauty and magnificence of non-organic things becomes meaningless, and, in this sense, their beauty does not mean completeness.

¹⁷³ Organic beings possess the movements of entelechy to some end but need not possess any awareness of anything. This is another type of motion. We must add that organic beings do not possess knowledge neither awareness properly speaking that man can have.

All organic and inorganic beings in the world are incomplete in another sense since they are not self-sufficient; they call for an ultimate reason (this reason or cause of organic and inorganic beings in the world is usually called today in an imprecise sense by philosophically minded scientists “intelligent designer” instead of absolute divine first cause or Creator God in a metaphysical or religious literature).¹⁷⁴ By this I don’t say that “ultimate reason” and “intelligent designer” are the same. In the religious literature we speak of Creator, “intelligent designer” is a kind of unphilosophical expression of philosophically minded scientists who avoid the metaphysical terms God or absolute being or Creator but mean this. The existence of God is also philosophically evident and not a mere matter of religion; moreover, an intelligent designer is presupposed for the construction of any machine, or tool, or any linguistic document, but in the 5a via of Thomas, well understood, implies by cogent reasons, infinitely more than an “intelligent designer”. All beings – including God - need a *raison d’être* why they exist and why they exist precisely in this way and not in another. This reason can lie in a being (and so it is with the absolute being) or outside it. All *contingent* and limited beings require an ultimate sufficient reason outside of themselves. In this very different sense (opposed to the notion of a closed causal universe) the entire universe is open to an extramundane being and cause.

Organic, but non-spiritual, entities encompass animals and plants. It includes organic beings as such which possess a movement of entelechy to some end but need not possess any awareness of anything. Animals and plants are capable of self-motion. We can observe in the natural world how sophisticated is the motion of a fox in hunting for a duck and how impressive is the slow, ponderous growth of a willow. Motion, however, even the spectacular form of self-motion of all living beings, does not imply openness in the full sense, since these motions (hunting, growth, etc., etc.) do not exceed their “contexts”; and if they have an

¹⁷⁴ This view is in accord with the majority of thinkers who has ever dealt with philosophy of nature. Conrad-Martius for example repeatedly points to the necessity of the purely spiritual foundation of reality.

object, it certainly remains within the context of their close surroundings. In other words, the significance and meaning of these motions never extends beyond their special and limited domain. Foxes, for example, in hunting a duck will never “ideologize” the purpose of their hunting. A fox will never refer to and will never differentiate between different purposes of hunting and will never put it into a special context, which would extend the act itself. It is only the person, who can objectify his acts and his objects introducing different purposes, reconsidering them and finally choosing from among them according to his free decision and will. We can conclude, even if the self-motion of animals and plants¹⁷⁵ is sophisticated and even if animals, who possess an entirely different form of self-motion compared to that of plants, seem to act in the framework of a certain freedom, one essential point is missing in the self-motion of organic, but non-spiritual beings: this self-motion lacks the central requirement of knowledge properly speaking and free will.

According to some theological views, however, man is not the ultimate possessor of freedom. According to Saint Thomas Aquinas, there are different degrees of being. He says, the higher the degree of being, the more freedom it possesses and the higher the perfection of a being, the more perfect its path is for self-realization. Considering these beings just from the perspective of their “motion,” we distinguish the following degrees of motion: the motion of non-living things, the purely organic self-motion of plants, the sentient and frequently in some sense “conscious” spontaneous self-motion of animals, and man’s conscious, free auto-determination, movement, and action.

Animals possess the capacity of a rather purely spontaneous but non-rational motion, whereas man is able to move and to act freely. There is, however, a still higher degree of free action and self-determination in angels, who are capable of absolute and instant self-realization. According to Thomas Aquinas, the ultimate and final free self-possession and

¹⁷⁵ According to Conrad-Martius, plants have a being that has its purpose the simple setting up of a shape.

action is a divine property and its highest manifestation in relation to the world occurs when God freely communicates and reveals Himself to men.¹⁷⁶ Quite generally speaking, man's dependence upon God is realized in ways completely different not only from any inner-worldly causation but also from divine creation of nature, and this not merely because the creation of a person endowed with spirit, intellect and free will, is a far deeper and mysterious causation than the creation of impersonal beings. The theological understanding also unveils a unique and unparalleled relation of interpersonal relations and communications between God and man. In my view, authentic freedom culminates in the willingness of sacrificing one's life for others, which means an original loving openness to the other incomparable to other kinds of world-openness.

It seems that inorganic, and organic but non-spiritual creatures are unable to realize their freedom in openness taken in the specific sense. Freedom must be understood in the context of a relation to the other (this "other" can refer to different things: men, world, things, divine reality, etc.). Non-living things, animals and plants, however, do not possess this relational freedom; consequently they cannot be open to the other in the specific ways proper only to persons.¹⁷⁷ We can draw the final consequence in the context of the openness rendered possible only through free will, that not even the phenomenon closest to the free action and motion of persons, spontaneous self-motion of animals, can be considered as an indication of openness properly speaking.

An animal hiding itself in the scrub waiting for the victim or the tree silently taking root can be considered open to the surrounding world, but only analogously. In my view, there is a fundamental ontological and not only a qualitative difference between the freedom

¹⁷⁶ Saint Thomas Aquinas in the *De Veritate* uses the expression of *communicativum sui*. See: *De Ver.* q VI. art. 2.

¹⁷⁷ For the sake of clarity I have to explain that I hold that animals cannot only learn but also have an analogy to the spontaneity of freedom such as when a dog saves his master rather than fleeing from danger. Nevertheless, I think that this is not freedom in its full sense; this can be considered freedom only analogously. The act that the dog performs is not an act of self-sacrifice, since, in my view, the dog saves his master according to another instinctive impulse, which can be hidden for us, but still it is an instinct. It follows that animals do not possess dignity to the extent as human beings do, who possess free will in the full sense.

and openness of the inorganic and the organic, but non-spiritual beings. The real qualitative difference lies between spiritual and non-spiritual, that is, between man, who possesses freedom and openness and all other creatures, which can possess freedom and openness only analogously.

2.7. What World-Openness is not: World-Openness is not Instinct

There are many phenomena that are similar to world-openness and there are others that are simply the antitheses of it. All those altogether are not the phenomenon what we are looking for. First of all, although the phenomenon of world-openness bears a certain resemblance to instincts (for example world-openness and instincts can both be considered as certain relations to the world; both seem working in the framework of some free spontaneity, etc.), it is obvious that they are profoundly different; as a matter of fact, it is even very questionable whether instinct is analogous to, rather than some opposite of, the phenomenon we are searching for. The aim of this chapter therefore is to define the relation between instincts and world-openness. In respect of our investigation this comparison is useful because one might easily confuse different phenomena which in fact bear only a minor resemblance. The aim of this chapter is to tell what instincts are. In this chapter (and in the forthcoming chapters too) we deal with a concept which is apparently similar to world-openness. The focus, however, of our investigation is the phenomenon of man's world-openness. In this sense we cannot give a full physiological, biological account on the theme of instincts. The appropriate delimitation and definition of instincts, however, will help us to see at least what the world-openness is not, which can help us to get closer to the true meaning of world-openness.

At the first sight, it may seem that world-openness functions like an instinct. Instincts can be found in man as well as in animals, but instincts do not determine man completely. Human beings can, to a certain extent, master themselves; they are not "slaves" of their instincts as for example animals are. Instincts, independently of being inherited somehow shaped by experience, do not define the totality of the behavior and relations of the human being. Instincts are present in the life of human beings, but play only a limited role in it. On

the other hand, animals are completely governed by their instincts. They cannot have personal aims, decisions and desires, which are by their very nature superior to instincts. Although non-spiritual living beings seem to be able, for example by training, to control their instincts, their control constitutes a closed system. This closed system is in itself meaningful (that is, it has a clear structure) and seems to operate as if it provided possibilities of transcending the limits of the subject. Instincts, for example, can save our life, even without us being conscious of the danger we are facing. The same goes for animals. As to human life inasmuch as it is guided by the automatism of reflexes and instincts, we breathe or have heart-beat and blood-circulation without having to think or to will any of these. Other instincts and experiences such as hunger or thirst and its satisfaction, keep us from dying from malnutrition or dehydration. It seems, therefore, that instincts help human beings to develop, and in this sense they seem to have a “transcendent” direction.

The most decisive distinction between a person’s world-openness and that rendered possible by instincts concerns the possession and exercise of free will. As I did in the previous chapter, here I will argue that there is an essential difference between man and all other creatures of the living and non-living world. Our question here is, in what sense can – or cannot – we speak of freedom in the case of acts performed by instincts? Without going into details, suffice it to say that a human act performed by an instinct by its very nature differs from an act performed freely. To perform something freely means initiating a human act from the unconstrained inwardness of the person who performs the act. Furthermore, performing free acts includes a certain deliberateness of the person. If a person wants an act to be performed, then he calculates – that is, rationally considers – the circumstances, possible outcomes, gravity of its reasons – whether those are grave enough to perform the act –, long and short-term consequences and many other aspects of the action. Moreover, even if the person had performed a freely chosen act, he knows that he could have chosen another act to

perform; he could have done otherwise. In instincts the elements of the freely chosen act are completely missing. There is no deliberation, rational consideration, nothing that we could call free action. Philosophically speaking, instincts exhibit a total lack of freedom. Even if sometimes we are inclined to say that in instincts there can be found a specific form of freedom, I think it exists only in a very limited form or only analogously.

Instincts in case of human beings are not acts initiated by deliberateness, and are not coming from the unconstrained inwardness of the performer; they are the results of causes standing outside of the human being. This is also true for animals and, since in the case of animals instincts play a more decisive role than in humans, and even an overarching role, animals possess no freedom. This also means that for animals there is also under the aspect of free will no room for world-openness in its genuine meaning. A closed, strongly determined structure cannot be considered as an authentically open system, as openness. Only where there is authentic freedom of choice in its full sense, can we talk about that dimension of openness that is linked to free will, a special characteristic that allows the person to reach, in its intentional and free acts, beyond the personal, ontological or other kinds of limitations and delimitations of his being, and even beyond the limitations of the cosmos which, as we have seen, makes for a special link between world-openness and God-openness and enables the human person to perform religious acts of love and adoration that cannot be conceived at all if man is conceived as a closed finite person striving only for his self-actualization or approaching being solely from the aspect of his own limited nature and desires..

The first philosopher who drew our attention to the fact that the body of animals is in full balance with their way of living and the means of their self-maintenance was Arthur Schopenhauer. Jakob von Uexküll, Max Scheler as well as Arnold Gehlen share in some degree a similar point of departure. According to them, animals do not perceive the richness and abundance of the world surrounding them. Animals, because of their instincts and lack of

intellect and authentic freedom, interact only in a limited sense with the world; they are unable to possess a world (*Welt*) in its original sense around them.¹⁷⁸ Von Uexküll, Scheler and Gehlen, while they have some points in common regarding the notion of the environment (*Umwelt*) of animals, differ in certain other respects. According to von Uexküll,¹⁷⁹ organisms can have different subjective *Umwelten*, which are distinctive from *Umgebung*. *Umgebung* is the objective world which the animal inhabits. Von Uexküll later applied the notion of surroundings or environment (*Umwelt*) also to the human person. In this view were to entail more than the obvious truth that humans also live in immediate surroundings and physical and social environments and maintained that human persons are entirely locked into their human environment, however, this opinion has been widely contested. The above mentioned thinkers all agree that animals strongly stick to their surroundings (*Umwelt*) in the sense that they can live only in, and are restricted to live, a specific environment which allows them only to perceive and react to a segment of the world. Living such kind of environment-bound (*umweltgebunden*) life, they are unable to go beyond in any sense of the word.

From what we have said so far it is evident that in whatever form we try to depict the instinctively furnished world, its principal characteristic is an inevitable closed-ness. When animals – independently of how sophisticated they are; whether it is an insect or a dog trained to find survivors under the ruins after an earthquake – behave according to their instincts, they can only behave and “experience” according to their inherited patterns¹⁸⁰ that they “knew”

¹⁷⁸ See Scheler, Max: *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos*. Darmstadt, 1928: 36. and Gehlen, Arnold: *Der Mensch. Seine Natur und seine Stellung in der Welt*. Bonn, 1950: 37. and 77-79.

¹⁷⁹ See his *Umwelt und Innenwelt der Tiere*, where he popularized his main ideas.

¹⁸⁰ This is not to deny that we might say that animals cannot only learn in an analogous sense to humans but that their reactions also demonstrate an analogy to the spontaneity of freedom such as when a dog saves his master rather than fleeing from danger. There can be made a great number of similar assertions concerning the animal world. I think, however, that all these assertions can be applied only analogously. This means that since the difference of nature and of the ontological status between human beings and animals are so huge, this makes real literal comparisons invalid.

before all kinds of experience.¹⁸¹ Knowing, experiencing and mastering (that is to transcend the limits of the agent) taken in their human sense, however, all presuppose real knowledge and freedom, and since instincts are not based on any understanding of their objects and meaning and cannot provide authentic freedom, instincts cannot be the basis of world-openness.

In contrast to the closedness of instincts, man's freedom of will can be regarded as the authentic basis of openness. Free will belongs so essentially to personhood that no being can be called a person if he or she is determined by outer or inner urges, by physical forces, by other persons, or even by his or her own fragile nature. To see this clearly, we must recognize that there is a free center of the person, by means of which the person himself can generate free acts. One should note that with the denial of human freedom almost every dimension of human activity would be reduced to nonsense. As Augustine, following Cicero, would say: "*Quod si ita [...] omnis humana vita subvertitur.*"¹⁸² Free will is inseparable from human beings and cannot be reduced to something else. In other words, freedom is an arch-phenomenon (*Urphänomenon*). Interpreting this problem from the viewpoint of the history of philosophy, we can say that every attempt to deny human freedom finally led to catastrophes. Communist and National Socialist pseudo-anthropologies destroyed the real nature of the human being, since they denied the free will of man, and led to inhuman anthropologies.

One of the main characteristics of freedom is that we are free for something not only free from something. It was Augustine who said for the very first time that human free will is the freedom for the good. Basically – in terms of this very positive definition – we are free to perform (morally) good acts and not bad acts.

¹⁸¹ In this sense we cannot use the expression "experience", since instinctively acting beings cannot have experiences in the genuine sense of the word. They don't experience the world; the world simply happens to them and in them. They are unconsciously merged in the *happenings* of the world.

¹⁸² Augustine: *De Civitate Dei*. V, 9.

Now, openness and the responsive character of free acts cannot be detected in the world of instincts. Instincts are fixed action-patterns, where there is no flexibility, since instincts are unchangeable, though they can in some ways adapted, develop by outside factors and stimuli, or be lost in an animal that is a pet and has left its natural surroundings. Nonetheless, especially in lower animals, certain stimuli will always initiate certain behavioral patterns and never others. An animal, for example, can perceive another animal or a human being, and in some astonishing ways be aware of their difference and behave accordingly, but its instinctual reactions will, in spite of certain modification, adaptations and losses, never entirely deviate from its preordained order. Actions like this lack the responsive character, even though human training can undoubtedly achieve astonishing patterns of behavior (in trained dogs or circus animals) that lie entirely outside of, and may even go against, what the same animals would do if entirely left to their instincts without human training and intervention. Whether we should call this a form of openness, is not that hard to answer. Insofar as we conceive openness as simple instinctual adaptations and reactions to surroundings, responses to stimuli or trained behavior dependent on training techniques, we can call animal behavior world-openness. Nevertheless, I think that this definition of openness is unsatisfactory. Insofar as we conceive openness as a conscious relation to the world and to other beings, in which responsive and self-abandoning attributes play the most important role, instincts and even the behavior of trained animals that depend on factors entirely outside their instinctual patterns of behavior but determined by the trainer, cannot be considered open.

There are, however, similarities between man's being open to the world and the peculiar openness of instincts. Both are a certain type of relation to the world. Human openness is an organic characteristic, which can have many objects and directions. Man can control, direct and regulate his openness; in other words man has certain dominance over his openness. The openness of an instinct, on the other hand, ultimately only has one object,

which is the predetermined objective of the act. In contrast to the openness of man, instincts and even more, a behavior determined by instincts, are rigid forms also in the sense that they are not learned but inherited. It is impossible to pick up and learn instincts. Nevertheless, in a certain sense we can say that instincts not only also involve a certain type of relation to the world but allow a certain interaction with the world and with a great series of variation which the basic object of an instinct, for example the animal prey that attracts a carnivore, can take in the world and to whose particular nature and instinctual reactions the predatory animal can adapt. We cannot really compare this, however, to the relation to the world of the human world-openness, which is a free, responsive and fundamental relation.

2.8. World-Openness is not World-view

The simple term “openness” is understood in various senses.¹⁸³ Human beings can be open to different kinds of things. There are levels of the scope of openness as well as different objects of it. In this section we will investigate the object and content of a special kind of openness. The aim of this chapter is to define the relation between world-view and world-openness. This comparison is useful because one might easily confuse different phenomena which in fact bear only a minor resemblance. The aim of this chapter is to give a brief account of what world-view is in respect of man’s world-openness. In this chapter we deal with a phenomenon which is apparently similar to world-openness. We are above all interested in the question in what their similarity consists and whether not rather dissimilarity between them is prevalent. The main focus of our investigation, however, is the phenomenon of man’s world-openness. The appropriate delimitation and definition of world-view, however, and its comparison to the phenomenon of world-openness can help us to get closer to the true meaning of world-openness.

World-views are man’s particular opinions about or conceptions of the world; in this sense, it seems that world-views are comparable and certainly related to world-openness. I think we cannot say more about the nature of world-views and their relation to world-openness before entering upon an analysis on the nature of world-view; otherwise we would be judging the phenomenon and notion prematurely. Starting from our everyday experiences, we can say that we often refer to different kinds of world-views as a regulatory openness to something. The notion of world-view (*Weltanschauung*) was coined by Wilhelm von Humboldt.¹⁸⁴ On the basis of one’s world-view, for example, one can reject military service or

¹⁸³ Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, IV,2. 1003 a 33: “to on pollakos legethai.”

¹⁸⁴ The notion has an enormous history. According to Husserl, for example, world-views mean non-reflected philosophical views behind the statements of specialized sciences. According to Scheler, however, specialized

condemn abortion. We usually do not accept without further ado the decisions taken by individuals or collectives when they refer to their world-views, since world-views are, in the common understanding, to be rationally justified and must not become arbitrary visions of the world that someone follows blindly regardless any evidences about the real structure of the world. World-view of a person, in an ideal form, is usually one single world-view; there do not exist different world-views of the very same person simultaneously. If a person has different views on different questions, which as a matter of fact constitute as a whole one single problem, or holds contradictory statements concerning one single topic, or from time to time changes his view, we call this person inconsistent or charge him with not having a consistent world-view at all.

World-view and world-openness, however, have something in common: they can be both conceived as attitudes towards the world. In its preliminary definition we would say that world-views can help to solve problems, questions and provides a conceptual framework for problems to be solved.¹⁸⁵ In contrast to world-openness, however, world-view has a restricted scope. Its main target and field is rather of a political and philosophical nature. Nevertheless, even if world-view refers to the world (that it has to do with the world as an object) and thus seems to be a condition of world-openness, not all human beings have a determinate view of the world as a whole; there can be persons who have no distinct world-views at all but are skeptics and lack any view of the world as a whole, or we can imagine human beings having a strict opinion on one question, but none or a less developed one on another. Persons who have world-views in the strict sense of the word can take actions without any connection to their world-views, since world-view does not refer to the entire breadth of human activities.

sciences depend on world-views in a more radical way than Husserl thought. See Max Scheler, *Man's Place in Nature*. New York: The Noonday Press, 1971: 63.

¹⁸⁵ This preliminary definition does not seem to be true in the case of a world-view, which is about what is most important in life. It is not an attitude but a vision of the world, nor does it seem to be helpful for anything. Its effect depends on its content and a person's commitment to live in accordance with his *Weltanschauung*, which is not always the case.

Activities, such as sleeping or traveling in a vehicle, have no significance concerning one's world-view. The Socialist who holds a Socialist world-view can sleep in the same way as a Conservative can. We, however, usually hold that world-view refers to the totality of the human being and of the world at large: we act according to the prescribed principles of our world-view. But many examples show that there are human actions that are independent of our world-view.

As to the content of world-view, there are different possibilities: some people have a very determinate world-view from the most universal aspects of the world and God to the most concrete political and moral issues that are essential enough to be called "world-view" other people do have practically none, or a mere negative skeptical world-view. The fact that there are persons who have no world-view whatsoever, or a mere skeptical one, clearly demonstrates that having an "all-embracing" determinate world-view is not a fundamental human characteristic. Moreover, and of course, having a world-view, as also world-openness in any sense, exists only potentially in embryos, unconscious, or mentally gravely impaired individuals. In other words, to be a human being in principle does not mean that we necessarily, by our essence, have world-views.

Besides, there are many human activities in which world-view plays no role whatsoever, such as when we warm a cup of soup. While admitting that faith and conviction are sometimes more deeply rooted in human beings than a simple opinion or a limited world-view, we have to acknowledge that there are situations and human actions in which faith, world-views and similar phenomena play no role.

World-view seems on the one hand, be presupposed by world-openness which presupposes some concept of the world as such that is missing in animals; on the other hand, world-view as conception of the world in its most important aspects seems to be preceded by the more fundamental characteristic of being open to the world, and thus, in the degree of

being open to the world, forming a world-view. It is precisely the primary nature of the phenomenon of being open to the world, which makes possible the development of any kind of opinion, world-view, viewpoint and judgment.

This does not mean necessarily that every person have a world-view. According to the common understanding to have a world-view includes certain reflectedness on the content of the world-view. We usually call a person having a world-view who is more or less aware of the main points of his or her world-view. World-view, however, like belief and opinion, can manifest itself for certain moments or in some aspects of life. There are apparently all-embracing world-views like the Christian or the Marxist world-view (to have a world-view like this does not necessarily mean, however, that the person is aware in all moments of his life of the content, requirements of his or her view), and there are world-views, which concern only one aspect or small part of the entire life of a person like a “vegetarian world-view” that refers to food, health, and perhaps to the ways in which we should treat or not treat animals. I think, nevertheless, that without structural world-openness as one of the main characteristics of the human being it would be impossible to develop both limited and comprehensive kinds of world-views.

Opinions and world-views can change. In world history, there have been so many converts who did one thing in one period of their lifetime and completely the opposite in another. Saint Paul, for example, persecuted the first Christians and presumably took part in the murder of a Christian. After he had himself become a Christian, he suffered from persecution and was murdered by the Romans because of his convictions.

However, the fundamental characteristic of world-openness cannot be considered as non-functioning or non-existing at certain points during our lifetime.¹⁸⁶ Man can change his world-view and faith, but never his fundamental structural openness to the world. Even if man

¹⁸⁶ We have to constantly keep in mind the hopefully more and more clear distinction between an attitude of world-openness, which of course can change and a kind of constitutional world-openness.

becomes an utterly inhuman beast, a speaking monster, or loses his consciousness and becomes paralyzed, he can never change his ultimate ontological disposition, that is, his being open to the world, no matter how narrow the world he created for and by himself is.

There are other dissimilarities we have to take into account. Although the very same indicates that a world-view is supposed a view on the world as a whole, the scope of the world-view as well as its content sometimes covers only certain parts of human reality, like the vegetarian world-view. World-views are also frequently politically and philosophically (theologically) oriented.

World-views are ways of looking at things. In other words, they are only convictions or mental dispositions, which have a more or less developed content or firm structure. World-views can color our more fundamental world-openness, but they will never reach the solidness, inalterability and ontological status of structural world-openness to the totality of being, to the cosmos and to the absolute being.

Finally, regarding the relation of world-openness and world-view, we can say that without structural world-openness it seems we could not have any world-views, while on the other hand the attitude of world-openness appears to presuppose already some knowledge and conviction about the world; thus structural world-openness seems to precede world-view, while world-view seems to precede an attitude of world-openness which, in its turn, can lead to a better knowledge and more adequate view of the world, while an attitude of closedness easily leads to an inadequate or to a certain absence of world-view, replacing it by a kind of indifference towards the question of truth about the world. Thus there seems to exist a dialectical relationship between world-openness as an attitude and world-view.

Structural world-openness not only precedes world-views, but gives us the possibility of developing different world-views. The very same world-openness can therefore be the foundation of different, even contradicting world-views.

2.9. World-Openness and Tolerance¹⁸⁷

In this chapter I will investigate another phenomenon, which is similar to the phenomenon of world-openness. Among the countless behavioral and reflective attitudes there is the phenomenon of tolerance, which shares some of the attributes of world-openness, while with respect to others it clearly differs. With the help of intuition, we can develop a preliminary definition of tolerance which we can use as a working concept. According to this preliminary definition, the principal components of the concept of toleration are: firstly, a tolerating subject and one or more other persons towards which the first person, society, community or state is tolerant (either one of these may be an individual, a group, an organization, or an institution); secondly, an attitude, action, belief or practice which is the object of toleration; thirdly, the act of evaluation and a negative attitude (dislike or moral disapproval) on the part of tolerator toward the object of toleration; finally, a significant degree of respect of freedom of persons and restraint in acting against the person who holds a negative opinion, takes a negative attitude, or performs acts which the tolerating party disapproves of morally or politically.

In this chapter I will argue that in respect to the tolerance-intolerance dichotomy we cannot identify tolerance with openness. There are instances where certain forms of intolerant actions can be considered as openness. In this chapter I will argue – in contrast to many recent political scientists – that the tolerance-intolerance dichotomy is not a universal principle, and there are higher universal principles which define our relation to the world.

What is tolerance then? Tolerance is an attitude of patient forbearance in the presence of some other person's beliefs or actions that are disliked or disapproved of by the tolerating

¹⁸⁷ This chapter is a completely revised and rewritten version of my previously published paper: "What is and what is not Religious Tolerance? (In) a Phenomenological Approach" *Mozaik* (2007) XI. 2006/2. pp. 28-31.

part. What are its objects? Tolerance has neither what one considers an error or wrong as object, nor the person to whom tolerance refers as such. Rather, out of respect for the dignity and freedom of the person, we tolerate *that he defends theses or commits actions* that we deem to be erroneous or wrong. Of course, tolerance of an individual or state has to have limits and must not extend to crimes.

The question as to the range of tolerance, i.e., which things, acts and attitudes should or should not be tolerated, and the degree of restraint required by toleration are philosophical and political problems. John Locke was a bit perplexed in his essay “Letter concerning Toleration”, since he held that if we tolerate somebody who lacks the spirit of tolerance, toleration can lead to our own destruction; on the other hand, if we refuse to tolerate the intolerant, we will sacrifice the principle of tolerance to something else which is not tolerance. On the whole, for Locke and for us tolerance seems to be a strange attitude and at any rate it is hard to define the limits within which certain ideas, speeches, or actions can be tolerated without having to respond to them by different kinds of private or public force or even prison. If one tolerates the objectively intolerable, obviously toleration is turning into an evil.

Tolerance is an attitude of patient forbearance in the presence of something that is disliked or disapproved of. It seems that tolerance has many common characteristics with the fundamental world-openness and the attitude of world-openness. The strangeness of tolerance can be seen in the fact that it is contaminated by that very implication of evil which its meaning contains.

It is clear that tolerance is not liberty nor indifference, nor love, nor some form of respect as such. We have to return to the question: What is tolerance? How does it differ from intolerance and from different tolerance-like attitudes? And what is its relation to world-openness?

The opposite of tolerance is intolerance. The decisive feature of intolerance is that patient forbearance of what objectively should be tolerated is missing. The second moment above and beyond the absence of “patient forbearance” is equally decisive. For if we deal with not tolerating something that ought not to be tolerated, we must not speak of intolerance. Moreover, tolerance does not have to do with the content of what we take to be erroneous convictions or bad actions, which the tolerant person may wholeheartedly reject, but with the respect for a person’s freedom and rights. For example, in a situation of religious intolerance,¹⁸⁸ the right of a person to hold a different religious belief or practice his religion is not accepted, and the tolerator’s negative attitude toward the person whose holding beliefs and actions judged to be incorrect ought to be tolerated, is not suppressed.¹⁸⁹ Acting against one’s own religious persuasion is not an intolerant action. If the action, however, attempts to force another person to abandon his religious conviction and practice or to suffer some disadvantage or persecution, it certainly can be called an intolerant action. A religious fanatic can act in such a way. Such an intolerant person not only despises the other religion and wants to see it vanish. Rather, the case of intolerance we do not respect the freedom of the other person and not only lack permissive conduct and not only decry religious acts that we hold to be based on error and blasphemous, but we also do not respect the other person’s dignity and freedom because we hate his or her conviction or religious practice. Now, in this sense, intolerance is a clear antithesis of openness in two respects. In the first respect it is an antithesis, because it deliberately disregards the possible richness and values in the religious search or act of the other person as well as in the elements of truth it may contain. An intolerant person is not open to the true meaning, nor to the potential benevolence, goodness

¹⁸⁸ The central problem of tolerance in Western history had been for centuries the problem of religious toleration. This is one of the consequences the West faced because its religion had been Christianity, nowadays, however, it is rather a “secularized” Christianity.

¹⁸⁹ It always depends very much what kind of negative thing is tolerated and consequently „negative attitude” is not certainly negative simply where someone disapproves of something negative.

or values of the other person,¹⁹⁰ which, while entirely absent in devil's worship or awefully superstitious religions such as the cult to Baal, are encountered in most religions. Secondly, an intolerant person does not follow Saint Augustine's word "Interfice errorem, ama errantem" (kill the error, love the one who errs). Instead, his actions are not guided by higher principles and by what is due to other persons, such as love or love for truth. Especially in the second respect, intolerance – and not only in its extreme forms – has to be considered as an antithesis to openness because an intolerant attitude aims not only at the views of the person, but directs itself against the person himself. This attitude contradicts the nature of love and the benevolent approach.

Nevertheless, there are instances where it seems that tolerance ceases to be called for. In the last few decades there were so many horrible examples of religious or religiously induced intolerance. We remember the horrible crime of the Japanese religious sect called *Aum Sinrikio* (in English 'Supreme Truth') in 1995, when 12 people were killed and hundreds were injured and the events which occur almost daily in the occupied territories of Palestine.¹⁹¹ The social danger of acts like these is obvious. No one would behave in a permissive way against such religious groups. Nevertheless, it is important to remark that in this case it is not the subject (the group, or the members of this religious group) that is not tolerated, but the form in which its belief (if it is a belief at all) is practiced. Thus, we can say that not every form of intolerance is wrong, though we should not use this negative term to designate a limit of what can be tolerated and a situation in which toleration would be clearly immoral; for it is obvious that an infinite tolerance regarding any bad attitude, vice, and crime would be an absurdity. And it is equally obvious that to call a state that confines first degree murderers to jail "intolerant" would be a misnomer. It seems that there are some forms of

¹⁹⁰ Of course none of these characteristics has to be always present in tolerance.

¹⁹¹ But the most horrible instance of intolerance was Jim Jones' sect, "Church of the People". Jones claimed to be the reincarnation of Jesus and Lenin. The whole community had to take poison – 638 adult and 236 child died in 1977 in Guyana.

non-tolerance that also the policy of a democratic society should adopt and maintain. Now, it seems that the tolerance-non-tolerance dichotomy and the primacy of tolerance are not the highest principles, which govern our everyday life. How can we solve this problem? The preceding examples suggest another explanation. The case of not tolerating intolerance shows that the very idea of tolerance is not an all-embracing principle; there is always the higher principle of justice, love and the love of truth behind tolerance, by which we must not tolerate any crimes and not even intolerance inasmuch as the latter offends against freedom of conscience and of religion.

Positive tolerance of evils that are not crimes and cannot be eliminated without attack on human freedom is one of many forms of respecting human dignity and freedom but we see clearly that tolerance is not a universal virtue, not only because it has the described limits but also because it only refers to a certain moderate form of errors and evils and does not comprise all elements of openness to truth and values nor their realization, as for example love does. My question is, in what sense does tolerance differ from love and what implications does it have concerning world-openness?

How does tolerance differ from love? It is obvious that according to our pre-philosophical understanding we suppose that there is a deeper relationship between love and tolerance and some may even be inclined to think that they are the same. In my view, love is essentially a relationship involving mutuality and reciprocity, rather than a polite way of forbearance. Love is an active interest in the well-being of the other; it does not stop at the patient forbearance of moderate evils that cannot be eliminated without violation of freedom (as tolerance does), and – because of its open character – it goes further and tries to change the other person if he or she is wrong according to the judgment of the loving person. One can observe this feature in Christianity for instance. The so-called baptismal-command of the

Gospel clearly states the active and obligatory mission of all Christians.¹⁹² In this sense, love does not endure without protesting the otherness of the other, it interferes. Moreover, love does not just or primarily refer to some evil or error or moral evils. Thus there is no similarity between love and tolerance as such. Their relation is restricted to toleration being one of many effects of love. But also here a toleration inspired by love is not the only form of tolerance but tolerance can be based on many other motives: justice, respect of human freedom, political prudence, fear of reprisals, wish to be oneself tolerated by other individuals and groups, etc. Unlike love, tolerance is based upon the negative judgment on the object of toleration on the part of the man who tolerates. Moreover, the loving person will first try to free the beloved person from his errors or vices; toleration is only the *ultima ratio* where all such attempts fail and where the harm of not tolerating an evil is greater than non-tolerance; the latter condition of meaningful tolerance is not met in the case of a crime or the plan to execute one.

In cases of the misuses of tolerance one tolerates everything indiscriminately, i.e., one disregards the evaluative moment. One cannot tolerate to the same degree two different kinds of religious groups if one of them is obviously dangerous. It would be a total misunderstanding and misuse of tolerance and of love.

In the case of indifference, which is also one special antithesis of tolerance, one is not interested in the values or evils existing in another person or group. On the other hand, in the case of toleration, one is interested in errors or evils one perceives in another person or group because toleration always presupposes evaluation value judgment that x or y is an evil. Without such a negative value judgment there would be no basis for tolerance. In other words, in order to tolerate something one has to know what and who is to be tolerated in that

¹⁹² “Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mk 16, 15-16.) and “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Mt 28, 18-19.) We have to admit that this is a very bold claim. This passage explicitly expresses the “unicity”, “universality”, and “absoluteness” of Christianity.

phenomenon or action. One tolerates something because one is familiar with its negative aspects and its limits, i.e., one knows what is to be tolerated and what is not. This means that one is open towards the other, and one's openness aims to investigate values and disvalues in another person's actions and beliefs. This openness, however, does not go beyond the limits of value-judgment and does not want to change the person or the erroneous view of the person, either because toleration is motivated by love but is the ultimate loving step when all efforts to change a person have failed, or tolerance comes from one of the other motives distinct from love, in which case tolerance entails a certain degree of lack of interest in the other, an interest we find in love. Tolerance always contains a negative judgment about a moral evil or error, but, as tolerance, does not go and act against this negativity. In the case of indifference, one does neither tolerate nor dislike (love or hate) anything, because one does not have (or does not want to have) enough information about the issue in question or has no interest in acting against something, etc.¹⁹³ Taking into consideration the preceding points, in my view, we cannot even compare love to indifference, because indifference is the total lack of openness toward the other group or person. The openness of a tolerant attitude is obvious; nevertheless it never reaches the level of the openness of love for the reasons we have explained.

The main purpose of the chapter was to draw our attention to this very important distinction. Real openness means therefore not only being open to another person, but benevolently participating in his or her life including initiating changes in his or her life.

¹⁹³ Lack of interest can have many reasons. A full explanation of this doesn't concern the main point of this chapter.

2.10. Attention paid to Things vs. World-Openness

Based on the insights of the preceding chapters (chapters 2.2-2.9.) and the chapter on the preliminary understanding on world-openness (chapter 2.1.), we have been able to develop a working definition of the phenomenon we are looking for. Nevertheless, we have still not managed to encapsulate fully what the phenomenon of world-openness is. In this chapter we concentrate to a phenomenon which is apparently similar to world-openness. The aim of this chapter is to tell what attention paid to things is. The definition of attention paid to things, however, will help us to see at least what world-openness is not, which can help us to get closer to the true meaning of world-openness.

When we speak about world-openness in this chapter we mean the openness, which constitutes an essential part of human being, which, however, can be manifested in different ways.¹⁹⁴ This openness belongs to my ontological structure. When I am sleeping I am open, as I am equally open in loving, in playing or in reading something. My openness surpasses me in different senses.

In contrast to this there is the phenomenon of attention, which is seemingly similar to world-openness, but certainly is not identical with it. Now, the task of this chapter is to clearly distinguish world-openness from the attention paid to things. We will proceed by examples and philosophical reasoning.

By the expression paying attention to things we mean an orientation toward a limited number of particular objects. It seems that in certain cases one can pay attention to the totality of things. This observation however cannot be justified, since the most attentive person cannot pay attention equally to everything. For example, the hunter's attention is oriented first of all toward the deer, which is supposed to arrive at one point of the dawn; meanwhile the

¹⁹⁴ Again and again I have to refer back to the basic insight we gained in the preceding chapters. There are two kinds of world-opennesses: the constitutional and the attitude of world-openness. See the conclusion of the thesis.

hunter also pays attention to the noises of the forest, to the activity of smaller animals, and to himself, intent on not moving, sneezing, and trying not to give any signs of life, since the deer will show up only once at the glade. We can say that theoretically the hunter is open to everything, but practically cannot be attentive to everything. Attention therefore can be directed only to a limited number of things. On the other hand, however, openness precedes and establishes attention.

The attention is the concentration of the human mind on a certain number of things (in an ideal case, on one thing). It includes conscious deliberation and aims at the thing. In this sense, human attention differs from animal attention. In the animal attention the element of the conscious and free reflection is missing. Animals also hunt and, governed by their instincts, are able to pay attention to things during the hunt. Nevertheless, animals will never suspend their hunt and change their attention because of free, conscious decisions and will never leave the glade because it is “tea time at home”. Animals can leave the glade because of the impulse of another instinct, but never because of free choice. The animal attention therefore differs from the human attention as the animal openness differs from the human openness.

World-openness differs from the phenomenon of attention paid to things also in the sense that it cannot be the result of a process of learning. One cannot develop skills in world-openness inasmuch as it is an original characteristic of humanity,¹⁹⁵ whereas attention is a faculty that we can constantly develop. This is the reason why one has to develop one’s faculty of concentration throughout one’s life. Children, for example, having not developed their capacity of concentration, will frequently suffer from a disorder of concentration, for example they will have problems with reading, since reading is a linear-successive

¹⁹⁵ Note: one can always develop his or her faculties in openness if we are talking about openness as attitude. For example one always can and has to develop his or her capacities of openness in the basic moral attitude of goodness.

concentration of the attention. Attention is a learnt capacity, which can be the target of destruction, whereas constitutional world-openness is not.

Attention can be called forth by attraction, for instance. Human attention is not a fixed one; one can provoke and at the time extinguish it. In my view, animal attention seems to be somewhat stronger in this scheme. World-openness, on the other hand, as a fundamental human characteristic distinct from a free attitude of openness, is simply there without any previous provocation or cause.

Attention is a special care or action, mostly a practical consideration. It has a certain duration, after its completion it simply vanishes. World-openness, on the other hand, possesses a certain independence from temporality. This characteristic, when it is found in the free attitude of word-openness, can be called its superactuality. We underline – using von Hildebrand’s terminology – the significance of world-openness’ superactual character in the construction, depth and continuity of personal life.¹⁹⁶ The structural world-openness, in contrast, is also lasting but, being a constitutive feature of the human nature, is not superactual as acts and attitudes can be. In this structural ontological sense, however, world-openness precedes and lays some foundation to the phenomenon of the specifically human attention paid to things. It is absurd to say that there will be a time when man will not be open in the sense of this lasting trait of the person, while we did distinguish in the spheres of attitude world-openness and closedness. On the other hand, it would be equally absurd to say that one is ontologically attentive to the totality of the world.

¹⁹⁶ See chapter (2.1.) on the preliminary meaning of world-openness, and Hildebrand’s view on the superactual character of many personal attitudes in his *Ethics*. Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Christian Ethics*, 2nd edition (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1978) Chapter 17.

2.11. Responsibility for the World and World-Openness

It seems that the phenomenon what we call world-openness, taken in the sense of universal openness to the totality, entails a meaning which seems to be close to the concept of responsibility for the world. We must therefore have a closer look at this sense also, and explain the relationship of the two phenomena. What we are trying to do here is similar to the act that we previously called delimitation. Delimitation here means, firstly, circumscribing the notion of responsibility and, secondly, comparing the preliminary understanding of world-openness as a feature which belongs to every people with the proper meaning of taking responsibility for the world. As a result of this comparison one can immediately see that “world-openness” taken in the sense of responsibility does not equal the structural-ontological understanding of world-openness. Accordingly we will immediately perceive that responsibility might have its origin in openness, but by no means is identical with it; by the same token, we will immediately see that bearing responsibility is different from *taking* or *accepting* responsibility. Taking responsibility might be a certain manifestation of the single act and attitude of openness - as we have discussed it in respect of man.¹⁹⁷

Among the many possible meanings of the term, we sometimes use the term “world-openness” in an environmentalist context. In this context, the world-open person is the one who takes into consideration issues of environmental conservation and behaves in an environmental-friendly way. We call a world-open man responsible and sensitive to matters of environment who proves himself to be responsible for the future of the globe and acts also in tiny things in accordance with this view. This understanding of world-openness seems to have a comprehensive character (as the proper meaning of world-openness has), namely it says that man is responsible for the totality of the world. In my view however this understanding is erroneous and doesn’t convey the original meaning of the phenomenon of

¹⁹⁷ See chapter 2.3. “Aspects in the person that can be open...”

world-openness in none of its understandings. Responsibility taken in the sense of bearing responsibility for the world does not necessarily imply any acceptance or taking of this responsibility. If a man pushes a button that will throw an atomic bomb on the entire humanity, he bears responsibility but maybe does not perform an act of consciously understanding, accepting, and taking on himself the moral obligation of taking care of humanity. If we consider only the ecological responsibility, we only consider a small portion of our responsibility for the world, the aspect of the enhancement of the environment. This meaning likewise disregards the epistemological, ontological, emotional, and many other volitional aspects of openness. We can say that world-openness taken in the sense of taking one's share in the environmental responsibility for the world is not an all-embracing meaning of world-openness and not as fundamental as others that we have discussed.

There are many other meanings of accepting responsibility which to a certain extent could be considered as particular kinds of openness. Nevertheless, none of these connotations equal the proper understanding of the phenomenon of world-openness. Responsibility is a moral phenomenon necessarily dependent on the existence of a person in possession of her faculties, but it is not a moral value nor a moral disvalue; taking responsibility or ignoring it or acting against it. When we say that we are responsible for something, our human responsibility always entails temporality and frequently lasts only for a certain time. For example, parents bear responsibility for their children. Nevertheless, after the maturity of the children parental responsibility largely elapses or changes to another kind of responsibility for a manifestation of affection toward the children and interest in their well-being.

The conditions of responsibility involve that a consciously acting person knows what he or she is doing and that he or she has as a minimum degree of freedom to control (that is, to initiate and to complete) the act that he or she performs. In general, a man is legally and/or

morally responsible for an action because he or she is the one who performs the action directly or indirectly.

It is widely accepted that free will and responsibility are tightly interrelated. Human free will, however, obtains its full meaning in the context of a more profound openness to the world, and not in the restricted context of the world-openness as a kind of limited ecological responsibility, because being in this sense responsibly open to the world shows only one aspect of the whole of the human existence. It is also true, that in order to be responsible for something, one has to be open, yet openness taken in the sense of being open in responsibility for ecological aspects of the environment does not comprise the full meaning of human freedom. Openness, on the other hand, being peculiar to man alone among all earthly creatures, and taken in the sense of ontological and all-embracing openness, while it itself is independent of responsibility and free will and bears no moral value at all, necessitates a more comprehensive understanding of freedom than it could be expressed in the context of such limited responsibility, although the deepest dimension of free will unfolds only in the moral sphere, the deepest value sphere, and there is always linked to moral responsibility that is absent in the structural ontological world-openness but can emerge on its basis in the response to our response to the whole world, especially to all personal beings which to refer to in loving affirmation is simultaneously the highest moral act and the supreme form of the attitude of openness, world-openness and God-openness

2.12. Antitheses of World-Openness

The phenomena which we have been discussing so far are not the antitheses of world-openness, but its certain restricted forms and manifestations. They indeed reflect some characteristics of the phenomenon of world-openness, which in its principal understanding constitutes a substantive part of the human being and, in its second meaning, is a free attitude opposed to others. Using a metaphor, we can say that phenomena like instincts, responsibility, tolerance, etc., are “images” of world-openness. These “images” (like responsibility, tolerance, etc.,) cannot be considered identical with the phenomenon itself which they depict, but they bear indeed a certain resemblance to the original idea of world-openness. Now, here in this chapter, we are going to try to investigate antitheses of world-openness which bear no resemblance whatsoever to world-openness proper, but rather constitute its counterpart.

Thus in this chapter we are interested in ways, respects, actions in which man acts closed to the world. We have to proceed concentrating on man’s acts, on the acting person, since our findings of the previous chapters suggest that world-openness is an exclusively human character, in which man is open to the divine reality. We can give a comprehensive name for man’s attribute of being closed to the world: this is the world-closedness. In short, we are looking for the human manifestations of world-closedness.

Now, insights of the previous chapters suggest that we have to distinguish basically between two types of openness: the structural and the attitude of world-openness. Here in this chapter I will speak about the antitheses of the attitude of world-openness, because attitudes can change or diminish, that is, can have antitheses, whereas constitutional world-openness can be absent in non-living beings or animals, but can have no antithetical, contrary opposite, but only the contradictory opposite of its non-existence or absence, that is, it has no antithesis, no hostile contrary. In stark contrast to this, the attitude of world-openness has clear

opposites. Moreover, while the structural ontological world-openness of the person cannot be absent in man, the attitude of world-openness certainly can.

There are six main aspects, in which man can be closed to the world. These modes of not being open to the world are overlapping. The first mode, in which man can be considered being closed to the world, results from egoism. Philosophically, an egoistic theory of ethics is a view which says that our actions are always motivated by a wish to benefit ourselves. An egoistical person always thinks about himself and what is the best for him. The man of egoism doesn't care about what benefits the others, disregards the other and the world, that is, he is artificially cut off from the reality of the world. He is "imprisoned", however not by other persons and not by the malevolence of others, but by his own ego. The egoistical man as a matter of fact does not recognize either the values or the existence of the other creature. An egoistical man is therefore closed to the values as well as to the real existence of the world.

The second sense in which a man can be considered as closed to the world is when he expresses hatred. Hatred is a specific state of mind which is opposed to love and charity as to other-directed acts. Hatred in the last analysis aims at the annihilation of the other. This however contrasts with the acknowledgment and above all the loving affirmation of the existence and value of the other. An act motivated by hatred, such as a deliberate murder, is closedness *par excellence*.

The third mode in which a man can be considered as being closed to the world is his denial of truth. In the context of closedness one can deny justice, necessary state of affairs, natural law and values, etc. The truth of all these states of affairs does not depend on mere observation. One can also deny physical and historical facts, but, since they are not "essentially necessary and incomparably intelligible"¹⁹⁸ states of facts, their denial does not result necessarily in being closed to the world as such. The denial of a historical fact, the date

¹⁹⁸ See Dietrich von Hildebrand, *What is Philosophy?* London and New York: Routledge 1991. Chapter IV.

of the beginning of the First World War, for example, does not mean that the person who denies it is not open to the truths of historical data and truth itself. In contrast to this, the denial of essentially necessary facts such as of the moral value of reverence – which, according to Dietrich von Hildebrand, is “the basis and at the same time an essential element of moral life and moral values”¹⁹⁹ – necessarily results in a closedness to the world. By the denial of reverence one also denies love, that is, the self-surrendering interiorization of the world, and equally denies values. In other words, the irreverent man – as Dietrich von Hildebrand would say – is blind to values.

Similarly, the statements and attitudes of the ancient and modern Sophists can also be considered as world-closedness. What did Plato have against the Sophists? He says that the Sophists endanger the human understanding and the common good of the society. Josef Pieper summarized excellently Plato’s thoughts concerning the method of Sophists:

According to Plato, the danger of Sophist lies in the nuances of their verbal use and the formal meaningfulness of their statements. The Sophists overloading the application of verbal constructions therethrough destroy the dignity and meaning of the very same word.²⁰⁰

By the abuse of words the Sophists negate and violate the real world. Insofar as words do not mediate reality, we are in delusion, or, in other words, we are in another world. Nevertheless, this delusion is not harmless; it has an effect on man, since “when words are corrupted man’s existence cannot remain untouched.” Plato holds that the brilliant use of words and their sophisticated combination has nothing to do with wisdom, which a real philosopher seeks for. Sophists juggle with words; they create illusory worlds, in which the only principle is the masterful game with words. Such an artificial language, however, is cut off from its proper origin, the truth.²⁰¹ The point of the use of language of the Sophist is to illegitimately influence others and to abuse the language by the dethronement of truth. Socrates says that the

¹⁹⁹ Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Fundamental Moral Attitudes*. New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 1950: 14.

²⁰⁰ Josef Pieper, *Abuse of Language - Abuse of Power*, San Francisco: Ignatius, 1992: 14-15.

²⁰¹ See Josef Pieper *op. cit.* 20.

Sophist does not communicate with his partner, rather flatters. The Sophist flatters, since he interacts with his interlocutor not for the sake of conveying information and not because of love for the truth. This, however, results in the end of a conversation, since the Sophist treats the other not as a person, but as a means. The first thought of the flattering Sophist is to get the money and later the soul of his partner. Plato describes this method in his “Republic” in this way:

And in what way does he who thinks that wisdom is the discernment of the tempers and tastes of the motley multitude, whether in painting or music, or, finally, in politics, differ from him whom I have been describing For when a man consorts with the many, and exhibits to them his poem or other work of art or the service which he has done the State, making them his judges when he is not obliged, the so-called necessity of Diomedes will oblige him to produce whatever they praise. And yet the reasons are utterly ludicrous which they give in confirmation of their own notions about the honorable and good. Did you ever hear any of them which were not?²⁰²

According to Plato, the philosopher searches for wisdom and is concerned with the ideas, which signify the real world; for them our world is only a shadow. Sophists, on the other hand, are concerned with *doxa*; they conceal the world, that is, they distort and pervert words. The enchained and misled people of Plato’s analogy of the cave accept the Sophist’s pseudo world as a real world. Consequently, people of the cave will refuse to acknowledge the possibility of another real world in reality. From this follows, that it is precisely the essences of things that are concealed from them. They pretend to know something in the cave, but in fact they don’t know anything; they live in a virtual world fabricated by the Sophists. The analogy of the cave of Plato bears a startling resemblance to the screen-gazer man of our age befuddled by the “eternal Sophist”. This is the man who stares at pseudo pictures on the wall deprived of truth and reality. Plato says that every man is nurtured by truth. In order to live a human life, therefore, one has to be nurtured by truth and not by different substitutes of the truth. The substitutions for the real world can constitute their own “worlds”, which are

²⁰² Plato, *The Republic*. (Book Five) 493 d – 493 e.

more or less similar to the real world. In comparison to the real world and truth, however, they are rather non-worlds, which obscure the real world. Consequently, the man living in such a “world” has to be considered world-closed.

The fourth sense in which a man can be closed to the world is when he exercises negligence.²⁰³ Negligence means lack of proper care or giving attention to things that demand it. Negligence shares some common points with egoism and often comes from it, though it is not a part of egoism. It is also an opposite to an attitude of responsibility. In my view, if negligence entails deliberation, that is, if it doesn't come from a simple ignorance, then negligence can be considered as closedness to the world. For example, if I do not help a person who needs immediate aid, then I reject the world of the other person as well as I lock myself up in my own world of egoism. There are many examples for negligence. The most known is the parable of the Good Samaritan.²⁰⁴ In this story Jesus contrasts the ethical standpoint of the priest and the Levite to the Good Samaritan's behavior. The priest as well as the Levite “walks on by, on the other side” and even if they see the heavily injured man, they deliberately exercise negligence; they show no signs of pity. This means that they are not open to certain phenomena of the world, which by their value and importance surely deserve attention. The response-demanded half dead man requires an immediate help, the priest and the Levite are impassive and indifferent. In this sense the priest and the Levite reject not only to participate in the life of the injured man, and are not only closed to the other person, but they are also closed in their egoism.

The fifth way in which a man can be considered as being closed to the world is when he is insensitive. Being insensitive means disregarding and rejecting of inherent values of a

²⁰³ It might be that *negligence* is not the most appropriate expression for the state of affairs which I would like to expound here. *Indifference, unconcern, disinterest, impassivity* are synonyms of negligence. Nevertheless, I would like to describe here a phenomenon, that independently of its name, must have been shown as an antithesis of concern (*Sorge*) for someone's well-being. I think the same can be said about all six main aspects in which man can be considered closed to the world. In each case I describe a phenomenon which

²⁰⁴ See Luke 10,25-37

person or a thing. When someone is insensitive then he lacks of openness to greatness in general. Greatness in this context might include – among others – ethical, aesthetic, personal, musical, philosophical values. For example, I think we can all agree that Leonardo's Mona Lisa is one of the best and most beautiful paintings of the world. Now, to hold that the Mona Lisa is an utterly ugly painting would mean disregarding its undeniable values. The reason of this insensitivity is most of all lack of knowledge coming from poor education or bad upbringing. When a person is not responsive, it does not mean necessarily that he does it on purpose. Independently of the fact, however, whether it is deliberate or, as it is in the case of insensitivity, unintentional, it can be considered still closedness.

The sixth sense in which a man can be considered closed to the world has to do with those situations in which he becomes addicted to something that closes up the real world from him. Addictions in this sense are virtual worlds, which have no access to the real world. The contraposition of the virtual and the real, and being and non-being, is one of the oldest problems of philosophy. There are, of course, different virtual worlds and different degrees of addiction; we cannot discuss the problem of virtual worlds in all their respects: here we are talking about addictions as virtual worlds disregarding the degree of man's submergence into the virtual world. Usually we call a person 'addicted' who is unable to stop taking or using excessively something as a habit. In this sense a heroin addict, for example, lives in his – virtual, non-real, sub-real or many times perverted – world with no contact to real values, real persons, real contacts and real truth. The man of addiction – as Josef Pieper says referring to virtual worlds resulted from abuse of language – is unable not only for finding the truth, but also searching for it.²⁰⁵ In my view not having an access to the world of real values and to the world of realities can be considered as closedness and a certain form of self-imprisonment. This happens to a person who lives in the virtual world of an addiction. The virtual world of

²⁰⁵ See Josef Pieper, *op. cit.* pp. 34-35.

the sex-addiction of the pornopages on Internet or the virtual world of child abuse, for example, frustrate man to have a real relation with the other sex, with a real, appropriate partner. This man, although he apparently lives in his virtual world, as a matter of fact, is closed to the real world.

We have discussed so far six main aspects (that is, ways, respects, behaviors and actions), in which man can be considered closed to the world. These aspects are attitudes in human beings. We have said previously that attitudes can change, whereas man's structural characteristics – and we have argued that constitutional world-openness belongs to this category – cannot change. Now, according to the analysis of the chapter, it seems that man can act contrary to his essential ontological structure in his attitudes. We can say, but solely in this context, that the principal common characteristic of these acts (antitheses of the attitude of world-openness) is the implicit (or explicit) denial of man's God-directedness.

Nevertheless, if we want to collect all the possible instances of world-closedness, then we have to take into account instances which are not of human origin. In a certain sense, however, since we have considered constitutional as well as the attitude of world-openness as a specifically human character, all what is not of human origin can be conceived as an antithesis to world-openness. From the viewpoint of the full understanding of world-openness, "openness" of non-human beings, for example, cannot be considered openness, rather an opposite or at best a faint analogy of it. Nevertheless, I wouldn't call the "openness" of non-living beings and animals a world-closedness. As a matter of fact – constitutional as well as the attitude of – world-openness is absent in non-living things and animals, but has no antithesis there. The main reason for this distinction is that attitudes of world-closedness entail the element of a conscious²⁰⁶ "turning away" from the principal end of man, whereas animals don't possess this conscious element. When a man submerges into the virtual world

²⁰⁶ We have to suppose that there is in each instances of the antithesis of world-openness at least the minimum of consciousness. Now, this minimum of consciousness indicates that it is a free, human act.

of a computer game and becomes addicted, he acts against his very nature and turns away from many higher and real natural values and from his supernatural end. In the animal openness, even if it is a reduced openness in comparison to the full meaning of openness, the conscious factor is missing. Animals (but it is true also for non-living and non-rational beings) cannot act against the laws of their pre-defined nature. It is only man who can act against his nature, because it is only man who has real freedom. The significance of this fact, however, is enormous, since it means that man is not the prisoner of the eternal flux, as the ancient Greeks taught, or of determinism and man is not only a finely structured piece of the matter, as Marxism proponed, but in fact can be open to the world and can be the embodied affirmation of the Infinite.

2.13. The pseudo Forms of World-Openness

Pseudo forms of world-openness can have their origin in different sources. The term “pseudo” signifies a thing or phenomenon, which is apparently similar to another thing or phenomenon, but in fact, differs in significant features. The difference between the two phenomena could be so great that it is sometimes really hard to tell whether it is a pseudo form or rather an antithesis of the original. My working hypothesis is to presuppose that the term ‘pseudo’ signifies a phenomenon which pretends to be identical with the original one. In our case, therefore, pseudo forms of world-openness are all phenomena, which pretend to be similar to world-openness, but actually aren’t.

In the light of this definition it seems that non-living and non-spiritual beings cannot be open to the world, not even in a pseudo manner. For living world-open in a pseudo manner would entail deliberate divergence from the normal, from the usual. Acting deliberately, that is, consciously, is something only man can do. Therefore, pseudo forms of world-openness can be found only in human beings. I consider pseudo forms of world-openness as special kinds of behavior (that is, I consider pseudo forms of world-openness as attitudes having incorrect direction and intention), in which man behaves against his very nature and against his openness.

There are many forms of behavior, which can be considered as pseudo forms of world-openness. Man can be non-authentically open to world, when he pretends to behave as if he were open – but in fact he isn’t. Conceited persons can behave like this. When a man behaves as if he were omniscient, pretending to be an expert in different kinds of sciences or pretending to be familiar with facts, phenomena, rules and principles, which in fact surpass his poor knowledge and experience, we consider him conceited. A conceited person pretends to be open to different kinds of worlds, but in fact he is not open to them. The man of pseudo

knowledge, because of his incompetence, creates fake worlds, which distort reality. This man is so concerned with his self-importance that he cannot disregard putting himself in the center in every question and in all aspects. Reality, however, is not always and in all respects man-centered, especially not individual-ego-centered. This man does not only create fake worlds, but causes self-deception: this man lies to himself. In this sense he is non-authentically open to two worlds: to the world as such and to his world, that is, to his concerns.

The so-called liberal attitude to the world also can be considered as a type of pseudo world-openness. Here I am talking about the liberal attitude in its everyday sense, as a world-view, not in its specific political-philosophical sense, which can be attributed to certain figures of philosophy such as John Locke or Adam Smith. There are many different types of liberal world-views and aspects in which a person can be considered as “liberal”. There are, however, a few common points, which also characterize liberalism in its everyday (mostly political) usage. The most salient feature of liberalism is the protection and development of the freedom of the individual. Different forms of liberalism agree on freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, sexual freedom, freedom of knowledge, freedom of speech and thinking, private property and free market.

From our point of view, the most important common feature of liberalisms is the way they relate to the world. Now, in this sense liberals are open to the world in a peculiar *laissez faire*-attitude. This means that for a liberal there is neither metaphysical nor epistemological absolute truth. The liberal person is open to the world in an “everything goes” manner. Nowadays, in the everyday usage, the term liberal became almost identical with the term world-open. In my view, however, world-openness is different from the liberals’ liberal world-view. The way of understanding the world of the liberals comes from their relativism regarding the truth of things. Liberals say that, since there is no truth, and even if there is truth we cannot take it for granted that we can know it, we have to be open to the world and accept

whatever comes and whatever it is. In my view this attitude is a pseudo form of the real openness, because liberals fail to do justice to the original motivation and object of this openness. For man is open to the world for its values and for its truth, from this follows that it is not only *l'art pour l'art*, that is, “openness for the sake of openness”-phenomenon.

The openness of the liberals is a pseudo form of openness also in the sense that they deny the possibility of cognition of the truth of the world. Now, denying the cognition of the world makes world-openness pointless. Liberals are open to the world indiscriminately, which is resulted from the fact that in their “openness” the evaluative moment is missing. Now, the evaluative moment is, however, indispensable also for the correct understanding of world-openness itself. In short, the liberal world-openness as opposed to truth cannot be regarded as real openness.

Political liberalism is also pseudo-openness because of its relativism. Relativism is a world-view, which says that truth(s), values, arch-phenomena are not always and generally valid, but are limited by the nature of the human mind, or are relative to history, culture, etc. For example according to moral relativism, moral values can vary culture by culture. In this world-view moral is like etiquette: it varies country by country, family by family and epoch by epoch. Now, it is my firm conviction that truth and values and, generally speaking the truth of things cannot be based on the cognition of man. Human thinking is not the ultimate source of truth and values. Shakespeare says in his Hamlet: “There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.” It means, in my view, that there are countless things existing independently of us, they are out of our reach, or in other words, the majority of the reality is hidden from us. It is hidden in the sense that it surpasses our cognition because of its infinity and because of its quality. To hold that the human mind is the ultimate source of reality would mean the denial not only the cognition of the reality, but the

existence of many aspects of reality which the human mind cannot, or sometimes, is too lazy to reach.

Relativism of liberals is a pseudo-openness also in the sense that it denies what it presupposes. For example in case of cultural relativism any attempt to compare different cultures would inevitably have to appeal to some assumptions universally found in human cultures, but, according to the principal dogma of relativism, cultural relativism denies that there are such significant cultural universals. The same goes for ethical, social and any other forms of relativisms. We have to reject relativism as incoherent, because it undermines the concepts of truth, meaning, understanding and objectivity. The main claims of relativism (all conflicting truths have equal values and all depends on the human cognition; *anthropos metron panton* – as Protagoras said²⁰⁷) are implausible. I think therefore that the relativist world-view cannot be considered as a world-open standpoint, since it denies truth and the cognition of truth as well as denies any common ground of dialogue and exchange of ideas.

Thirdly, I consider openness as pseudo if it is the kind of openness that is directed toward pseudo values. For example if a man says that he is open to the world of values of music, but in fact he is open (and listens) only to one type of music, which is as a matter of fact destructive and valueless mass music, then we cannot consider him open to the real values of music. This man is open to pseudo values, he pretends to be familiar with music, but in fact he knows neither the real values of music nor music itself. For pseudo values can seduce man and deprive him from developing and having access to the world of real values. Pseudo values are like intoxication: they paralyze man and often hamstring any further development in recognition of higher values. In this case, the man, who listens during his whole life mass music, such as pop music, will lose the sense for higher values of music. There are so many other forms and formulas of rhythm, ways of musical modalities,

²⁰⁷ See Plato, *Theaetetus* 152 A-B

thousands of musical solutions, which the XX-XXI. century's pop music's lower level value cannot express. In comparison to the grandiosity of Bach's Saint John's Passion, songs of the pop culture possess pseudo values. Traditional and authentic folk music has also high values. It is beyond doubt that folk music is beautiful but is different from higher classical music. Nevertheless, I wouldn't say that folk music has no real values or it would have pseudo values. Folk music has real values and the popular modern music will never reach the structure, meaning, and musical complexity of folk music. The one who listens throughout one's life to pop music will lose sight of the values of real music, or, in other words, after a while one will be deaf for the real values of music.

Perhaps another example can shed more light on the point I would like to make. The one, who sees the difference between a real work of art and a cartoon, will immediately see the difference between the values of fine arts and the values of a cartoon such as Disney's Mickey Mouse. Nowadays, there are many who hold that cartoons are on the same level of values as classical works of art are, and by watching cartoons one can have an insight into the world of values. In contrast to this view I claim that cartoons and all similar sorts of products of man cannot exceed their limited structural framework and cannot point to higher levels of values. In comparison to the sublime values of classical art of painting, cartoons have pseudo values, which are more temporal than eternal, one-dimensional than all-embracing, disintegrative than all-integrated. In this sense, however, all those who claim to be open to values and to the world through cartoons are mistaken (this is also true for other artifacts of lower value), since they are open simply to pseudo values.

In short, our last two examples show that in neither case we can say that one is open to the world in its real sense; in neither case we can say that one is open to values, on the contrary we confirm that in both cases one is open to pseudo values. Being open to pseudo values, however, is not world-openness as such, but its pseudo form.

The Object of Man's World-Openness – the World

3.1. What the Concept of the “World” means? Interpretations of the Concept of the World

In the previous sections of our investigations we presupposed that the phenomenon of (world-)openness, of which we said that its appropriate interpretation is God-directedness, conditionally contains two elements. It seems to be reasonable to say that in the phenomenon of world-openness there is the “one” who is open and there is “something” that the “who” is open to. The first “part” of the phenomenon of world-openness is the human element. According to our earlier insights, it is, at least on this earth, always and only man, who is the subject of the openness. It is man, who is open to the world in the full sense of the word and not other creatures, such as non-spiritual beings, and other non-living things. We came to this conclusion after a careful investigation of different possible subjects of the phenomenon of world-openness. The second element of the phenomenon of world-openness is its direction.

Now, whether this distinction between the two elements is well-founded and justified can be ascertained only after reading the whole series of the analyses of the thesis. The reason for this lies in the nature of the phenomenological analysis. Since the thesis intends to be phenomenological, it has to go through numerous distinctions, differentiations, examples, which shed light on distinctions and differentiations, explanations and specifications. On the other hand, phenomenology can apply working definitions, which can serve as starting point for the whole analysis. It seems, therefore, that we cannot say anything essential concerning the phenomenon until we get through all these processes. It is true only in part; there are some points, which we would like to underline here. These are: firstly, that the phenomenon of world-openness as God-directedness has a highly intelligible, – in my view – necessary essence, and secondly, the basic attributes of world-openness also have intelligible essences, which enable the human mind to gain an insight into necessary states of facts, essentially

rooted in their nature. I think, without the intuitive presupposition of these conditions the whole thesis would be meaningless. It is true, however, that the justification of these theses can be fully ascertained only after completing all the distinctions to be made in the thesis. At this stage all that we can say is that world-openness interpreted as culminating and transcending itself in God-directedness might have two basic elements. The method of phenomenology will obviously help to overcome the misunderstandings and misinterpretations of all kinds of reductionist views on the human being and on his chief characteristic: world-openness. By the investigation of one specific human phenomenon, one can point to a characteristic, which essentially belongs to the human being.

In this section of the thesis, we are interested in the problem of the proper direction of world-openness. There are two main questions, which should be answered here. What or who is the proper object of man's openness? And, whether there are other comprehensive objects besides world and God, which also can be an aim of a different openness? Now, since our main objective with the investigation of the phenomenon of world-openness is to define man's place in the world, we will have a better understanding of the human being insofar as we are able to emphasize the proper subject of our inquiry. So far we have concluded that its proper subjects are not animals and non-living beings, but the human being. We have emphasized that the human being is an original openness, that is, man is a spirit (*Geist*), and the proper object of his openness (both metaphysical and attitudinal) is God. Now, this final statement is again based on intuitive knowledge gained from the reflections on the subject of openness. The task of the following analysis is to bring to light the proper object of man's openness.

The question of the meaning of the concept of the world is more difficult than we supposed at the beginning, since it involves a whole series of other problems. We must distinguish first of all between different objects of man's openness, namely when we speak

about man's openness we do not necessarily mean (and understand) the "world" in its everyday meaning. Secondly, we must distinguish between the various meanings of the concept of the world proper. The concept of the world has diversified senses, such as the physical world, the natural world, the life-world, the virtual world, etc. These meanings have to be investigated as well. Thirdly, since there are various opennesses, we have to examine the possible object(s) of these opennesses as well. Now, it might be that, since there are less significant opennesses in respect of our topic, some objects bear also less philosophical relevance. The point of the investigation of these phenomena is to tell, after the analysis referring to the phenomenon, that this is not the interpretation what we were looking for. Finally, we must carry out our project in the light of God-openness intuiting that the divine reality is philosophically the most meaningful object of man's openness.

It is therefore the central aim of the third main part of the thesis to investigate the appearances, "types" of the world as much as possible including forms, which might also be the antitheses of it, such as the world of the non-being or virtual worlds. I will argue that there are meaningful interpretations of the object(s) of the phenomenon of world-openness. I will argue, however, that a good interpretation includes God-directedness of the human being and a theistic interpretation of his world-openness.

Max Scheler distinguishes between facts (*Welttatsachen*) and archphenomena (*Urgegebenes*). According to Scheler, *Welttatsachen* can be proven (he uses the word *Beweis*), whereas *Urgegebenes* cannot be proven. Now, following Scheler's train of thoughts I think that the phenomenon of the world is also an arch-datum. A very special philosophical method is required to understand its real essence. The phenomenon of the world as archphenomenon cannot be proven, but – as the phenomenological tradition would formulate – can be found. Scheler characterizes this method as the following:

We can co-operate in this process by bringing before his notice all that can be found in other regions of the mind, *already known and familiar, to*

resemble, or again to afford some special contrast to, the particular experience we wish to elucidate [...] In other words *our X* cannot, strictly speaking, be taught, it *can be evoked, awakened* in the mind; *as everything that comes “of the spirit” must be awakened.*²⁰⁸

Now, the phenomenon of the world as *Urgegebenes* belongs to the realm of non-provable things, namely they (as the “we”, the “ego”, the “existence”, the “religious experience”, etc.) are primordial phenomena. This insight suggests that the world is an archphenomenon of human consciousness and that there is nothing provable in this.²⁰⁹ We live in the paradoxical condition of both having the world and yet being part of it. It is paradoxical and in fact hard to understand that even if we perish, the world will still go on. In my existence the world is there, even if I am only one part of it. This my-world will once disappear, but in another sense the world will be there after my death. The paradoxical nature of the phenomenon of the world as *Urgegebenes* is very well expressed by Robert Sokolowski, the renowned historicist of the phenomenological movement. He says:

So there are many things in the world, all given in different manners of presentation. There is also *the world* itself, which is given in still a different way. The world is not a large “thing”, nor is it the sum of the things that have been or can be experienced. The world is not like a sphere floating in space, nor is it a collection of moving objects. The world is more like a context, a setting, a background, or a horizon for all the things there are, all the things that can be intended and given to us; the world is not another thing competing with them. It is the whole for them all, not the sum of them all, and it is given to us as a special kind of identity. We could never have the world given to us as one item among many, nor even as a single item: it is given only as encompassing all the items. It contains everything, but not like any worldly container. The term “world” is a *singulare tantum*; there could only be one of them. There may be many galaxies, there may be many home planets for conscious being [...], but there is only one world. “The world” is not an astronomical concept; it is a concept related to our immediate experience. The world is the ultimate setting for ourselves and

²⁰⁸ Quoted in Scheler 1972: 170. (Here Scheler quotes Rudolf Otto’s *The Idea of the Holy*. 1958: 7.) (Italics are mine.)

²⁰⁹ Perhaps Scheler’s example of the archphenomenon of religious experience can be used as a paradigm for the archphenomenon of the world. He says: “The sphere of an absolute Being as such, regardless of whether it is accessible to experience or knowledge, belongs to the essence of man just as much as self-consciousness and consciousness of the world.” Scheler 1979: 89. We can reformulate our insights on the phenomenon of the world using Scheler’s words: The sphere of the phenomenon of the world as such, regardless of whether it is accessible to experience or knowledge, belongs to the essence of man just as much as self-consciousness.

for all the things we experience. The world is the concrete and actual whole for experience.²¹⁰

“There is only one world”, but it is “given in different manners of presentation.” The selection of various worlds that shall be analyzed in the following chapters is not a result of an arbitrary will. Having a preliminary understanding of what world-openness is, we can suppose that there are certain kinds of worlds, which cannot be the object and context of man’s openness. They are neither comprehensive nor have philosophical value. In one word, there are worlds that we can exclude from the scope of our investigation. This selection is important from a philosophical point of view, since the present analysis cannot be an encyclopedia of different meanings of the concept of the world, but intends to be a real phenomenological analysis. The analysis will also show whether the meaning of the above cited text of Sokolowski is true. In my view it contains many good insights concerning the phenomenon of the world; nevertheless the world that we are searching for is inevitably more and valuable than it is in his understanding. Our question is: what is the meaning of the world that corresponds to our understanding of world-openness?

²¹⁰ Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 43-44.

3.2. Pre-philosophical Understandings of the Notion of the World

The notion of the world, which we are trying to delineate in this chapter, although it is indicated as non-philosophical and pre-philosophical, doesn't suggest at all that it would be anti-philosophical or something which hinders a further real philosophical investigation of the phenomenon. We have to consider these understandings of the world as preparatory, but still valid views. Take the example of the intellectual development of a philosopher. Our first thoughts can be considered as invalid, premature pseudo-philosophical statements – moreover, sometimes as humbugs –, although they can form the basis of our later mature philosophical views. These thoughts were less developed, they were incomplete; moreover, there was certainly no clear order or hierarchy among these pre-philosophical thoughts. Since there was no hierarchy there was no system either.

To think, however, prior to philosophy doesn't mean to be totally insensitive to the real questions and problems of philosophy and to the real method of philosophizing. I think that if one sincerely tries to trace things back, and wants to know the real origin and place of the things around him, that is, if one is interested in the problems of a genuine foundation (*Begründung*) or principles of the things, he is on the best way to be a philosopher in the strict sense of the word. Now, I think it is now clear what I mean by philosophical thinking. By the term philosophical thinking I mean an attempt for a structured intellectualization of the world as such in the manner of the deepest sincerity dedicated to the real problems of the world. I claim that traces of this truth-seeker attitude can also be found in the pre-philosophical thinking. Sokolowski also confirms this insight, he says:

“The most important contribution phenomenology has made to culture and the intellectual life is to have validated the truth of prephilosophical life, experience, and thinking. It insists that the exercises of reason that are carried out in the natural attitude are valid and true. Truth is achieved before philosophy comes on the scene. The natural intentionalities do reach

fulfillment and evidence, and philosophy can never substitute for what they do.”²¹¹

Our question is: what is this pre-philosophical, naïve thinking and what sort of a concept about the world it can have? I will begin by clarifying the sense of the terms of “pre-philosophical” and “naïve”. By the term “pre-philosophical” I mean a certain thinking, which does not strive placing all its worldly data into one single structure. The term pre-philosophical means, in my understanding, an unreflected thinking which is lacking a coherent system. Naïve thinking, however, isn’t necessarily a collection of foolish thoughts, due to of its innocence it can be considered as a certain type of wisdom. Generally we can say, that we call someone naïve, who is ready to believe what one is told, and ready to believe the way the world is around him corresponds to reality. In the naïve thinking there is no transference. Transference means that when, for example, one is kindly disposed towards another person without presupposing a possible wrongdoing or a betrayal of the anticipatory goodwill.

A par excellence pre-philosophical thinking is the intellectual world of children. Children (from 1 to 8 years) have certainly very interesting views about the world around them. Without going into details concerning the characteristics of the thinking of children – here we have to omit the clarification of this point, since the present investigation concentrates only on the notion of the world and not on the psychological or medical aspects of the development of the human brain system – let me have two remarks.

In my view, the thinking of the children is naïve thinking *par excellence*. Naïve in the sense that they take immediately seriously what they hear and what is said to them. They immediately believe in the real existence of the seen or heard being of whatever absurd character. There are many examples to prove that. Let me share just one example to the reader. Once a man told to a child, in a joking manner, that he was going to put him into the

²¹¹ Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000: 63.

refrigerator. After this joke the child was convinced that the adult was going put him into the refrigerator; the child was unable to understand this statement as a joke. Later, whenever he saw this man, he became desperately afraid of being put into the refrigerator. Moreover, he continuously feared the refrigerator. The child took seriously what the adult had said. Now, what is important and interesting for us in this story is the childlike direct contact with the world and the immediate taking seriously of the words related different segments of life, and not the lack of the ability of abstraction of children. To a certain degree children do possess the ability of abstraction, but they have to reach a certain age for the conscious use of abstraction. Mathematics, for example, as one of the stages of abstraction, does require a certain maturity. So does philosophy, which is – according to Plato and Aristotle – the third stage of abstraction.²¹²

Now, according to this example, children are immediately ready to believe to be real what has been said by others. A child can be deeply disappointed or even shocked by the breaking of a promise. This is, for example, why children should not watch TV, because they believe indiscriminately what they see (as for example also adults can do who degenerated and remained mentally childish). Naivety means here a kind of thinking with the characteristic of believing of the immediate realized presence of what has been said, heard or seen.

My second remark concerns the imaginary faculty of children. Under the term “imaginary faculty” I mean a particular ability to place oneself in a given context or situation. It is not a capacity of theatricalism; it is more, since it contains the element of total self-giving to the context, which is in contrast to the temporary nature of any kind of pretending. It is astonishing as children can be animated and stimulated by tales. The way children listen to such tales, the depth as the tales occupy their mind and the incomparably living contact with

²¹² See Plato's division concerning the age of philosophers and Aristotle's substantial remark on this issue.

the figures of the tales show a unique capacity of children living in a completely different world. This imaginary potential has not only a superlatively rich content, but its duration is also exceptional. This is the reason why little girls from the first time of hearing a fairy tale with a prince, want to marry a prince. Or this is the reason why boys find interesting and can be so much involved in games related with fighting, which much more conforms to their character than pampering dolls.

At the beginning of this chapter I suggested that the intellectual world of a child can be conceived as one type of the pre-philosophical, naive thinking. I also said that this thinking defines the world of the child. This investigation, however, can only be a secondary reflection, since the intellectual world of children is inaccessible for us. The main question however is still the same: what are the characteristics of the naïve world of the children?

The remarks above suggest that children live in an “immediate” world. By the term immediate I mean a kind of tight but organic relation to the objects of the world, which doesn't question the existence of those objects and accepts its real being (reality). Immediateness comes from naivety. Children are not good liars, even if they are taught to lie; they cannot lie as adults can. Children cannot lie especially cannot hold a lie for longer period, because it would be an artificially fabricated (fearful, ungraspable) world, to which the child cannot have immediate contact. In other words, the child knows that the lie would represent a different world, but this is the world, that the child simply does not want, since he or she does not see the point of it and is afraid of it, because its unknown nature. Immediateness also means that even if the child lives in a fabricated world, he or she still lives in full contact with this world. This happens, for example, when children play a role. It might be that the child plays the role for ages, in his whole childhood.

Playing, however, which dominates the majority of the life of a child, is not an artificial and virtual world as, for example, the virtual world of a drug addict. Drug addicts

usually cannot stop taking harmful drugs. Drugs are substances (especially those – cocaine and heroin – which are habit-forming), which affect the nervous system and cause disorder in the mental capacities of the person. Now, the use of drugs from a philosophical point of view can be considered as an “entrance” into a virtual world, where man fabricates a totally artificial universe, which is dominated by his all-embracing but at the same time destructive “subjective idealism”. The virtuality of drugs has no contact of any kind with the real, external world. It is an in-itself-closed-system, where there is no way out. The drug addict loses himself in the labyrinth of the drug, which finally can kill the person. Nevertheless, drug addicts confess that they enjoy it and find the experience of the drug pleasant for them. They also claim that the experience can help them to overcome the tiredness and difficulties of everyday life. Others say that they need the drugs because it prevents mental derangement. They also say that there is no significant difference between taking drugs and smoking or drinking alcohol. Moreover, coffee – they say – can be considered as a legal drug, the legalization of different types of drugs is therefore only a question of time. The main point of their argument is that since the drugs are for man and for life, man can control drugs. In fact, however, – without going into a detailed description of the problem of the use of legalized, illegal, natural or synthetic, etc., etc., drugs – I think that the virtual world of drugs can have extremely far-reaching control over man. Under the influence of drugs one is controlled and dominated decisively by the drug. In other words, the use of drugs constitutes a new, but virtual world. This new world, however, is virtual *par excellence*. Its main characteristic is not that it is esoteric or simply obscured or hidden, but the lack of authentic connection with the reality of life, with life itself.

The world of the children bears in fact resemblances to the virtual world of the drug addict, but there are significant differences. The first difference is that even if the world of a child also defines itself as an opposite of the real world, it is still open to the real world and is

not a strictly closed status or situation. The playful games of children receive their full meaning in the wider context of life. Since the playing of children is for the life (that is, playing contributes to solve future problems, contributes to the personal spiritual growth of the child, etc.,) and not against it, neither a tacit demand to perturb it, it is a “world” necessarily belonging to human existence, whereas drug addiction is not. By the term “being something for life” I mean a specific moment or manifestation of life, which is in favor of it, which promotes it, even if apparently – to a certain extent – it can have negative tendencies. Games and playing, however, have definitive constructive and helpful qualities. It is helpful since it provides examples for the future life of a child. Playing cooking in a small kitchen can be considered as a preparation for the future real activities in a real kitchen. The same goes for playing with dolls. Children – boys also – play with dolls for “training” for bringing themselves to an unconsciously desired standard of efficiency or behavior. This practice will help in their real life in the upbringing of their children. The world of the games of children is therefore an open world, not as the world of the drug addict. Being open in this context signifies positive characteristic: being open to other realities, that is, being connected with the world. The playful world of the children serves as a preparation for their future life-events, it can be considered therefore as an organic connection with life; it is an essential part of the real world of man.

Theoretically in the world of the children there is always a “way out” from the present situation, whereas in case of drugs, there is only a one-way direction. Man can grow up leaving behind his childlike customs, which with adulthood find their right place and meaning. There are two main characteristics of the negative virtual worlds of all kinds (such as delirium tremens, special kind of addictions, the virtual world of dangerous computer games, which can lead to destructive obsession and addiction, etc.); firstly, that man might lose himself in them, and, secondly, that there is no real aim in these worlds. The virtual

world of the drug addict destroys his or her personality, in contrast to the constructive “virtual” world of the children, which contributes to the development of the personality of the child providing a real aim and meaning beyond childhood. The same can be said about the virtual worlds of poetry and works of literary art, various works of art and many other games such as chess. Insofar as they have in fact a connection to the real world and contribute to the development of the personality of man, or in other words, are not self-contained, they can be considered as good, constructive virtual worlds.

By addressing the problem of the pre-philosophical thinking we encounter the question of the definition of philosophy in a very special context, since it raises the question of philosophy before philosophy. I think we might formulate the point of the difficulty in a very simple way: what kind of philosophy was there before philosophy? If we define philosophy as a particular set or system of insights and beliefs resulting from the search for knowledge, which might be considered as guiding principle for behavior,²¹³ then it seems that philosophy and humanity are of the same age. It doesn't help us either if we appeal to Plato's definition, where he says that philosophy “is the acquisition of knowledge”.²¹⁴ If we take any definition of philosophy from any philosopher it seems that philosophy can be identified with thinking (even if one tries to define further the mode and object of thinking), I think therefore that the best way to deal with the problem of pre-philosophical thinking if we distinguish between philosophical and pre-philosophical thinking according to age and maturity. In this sense, thoughts are pre-philosophical uttered by a person who hasn't reached a certain maturity. If we do not identify philosophy with thinking, we might encounter again the same problem of differentiating thinking from philosophy.

To sum up we can say that the pre-philosophical world is only an apparently closed world, which is, however, only temporally closed and it is not at any rate closed by its

²¹³ At least this is the definition of philosophy of the standard Oxford English dictionary. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. A. P. Cowie (chief editor) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

²¹⁴ Plato *Euthydemus* 288d

essence. Living in a pre-philosophical world means unreflectedness to the totality, that is, the immediate reality suffices the person of the pre-philosophical world.

3.3. The Concept of the World in the Phenomenological Tradition

Immanuel Kant writes in his work from the year 1770 (*De mundi sensibilis atque intelligibilis forma et principiis*) that the world is the “cross of the philosopher”. He means by this that the philosopher pursuing his extremely hard conceptual and intellectual vocation with worldly matters encounters the world in an uncomplicated and at the same time in a very brutal and extremely complex way. This encounter requires an incomparably huge effort since the drama of the philosopher – if we consider the task of the philosopher from a general philosophical point of view – is to deal with the dual character of the world as it is supposed in naiveté and in its reality. The overcoming of this duality, reconciliation or confrontation of the worldly matters with reality, coming from the darkness to the light, the commitment to reality in contrast to virtual has been the eminent and eternal task of the philosopher.

From the point of view and relevance of the phenomenon of the world phenomenology is characterized in this chapter as an attempt to articulate the traditional questions of the world overcoming of all its immature views. It was not, however, the 19th century – nor the preceding ones – when the question of the world became of utmost importance, but the 20th century.²¹⁵ This statement, however, does not want to say that thousand years of philosophical investigations of the world were meaningless or useless. For example, Plato's views on the world and the universe, as well as Saint Thomas Aquinas' colorful observations concerning the world are among the greatest achievements of the history of philosophy. With the statement above I want to say that the rapid technological, biological, communicational, etc., developments of the 20th and 21st century handed out man to the challenges of development and to the desperate and cruel historical circumstances, and the traditional philosophical

²¹⁵ One might think that with the emergence of materialism the notion of the world has received its right appreciation. In the next chapter, however, I try to argue that materialism fails to grasp the plurality of meanings of the phenomenon of the world, since matter-world is only one aspect of it.

understandings of man were incapable of handle the problem, and this is precisely (along with the misinterpretation of the scientific knowledge – as Husserl claimed) which led to a crisis.

The subject of this crisis is man. Admitting the crisis of man we can still say with Wolfhart Pannenberg: “We are living in the epoch of anthropology”.²¹⁶ Nevertheless, I think that the phenomenological philosophy is an adequate answer to the crisis.²¹⁷ It seems that the crisis’ first object is man; however, from the point of view of our investigation, its second object is the world. The crisis concerns first of all the human being, and only secondarily and additionally all those issues which also belong to him. Now, the world has always been identified as a problem belonging essentially to man. In this sense the crisis of the man is at the same time the crisis of the world. For example, Edmund Husserl's oeuvre, especially the Crisis-book, can be conceived as a grandiose attempt to place man and his world into the right place. Husserl's notion of life-world comes from the insight that scientific knowledge is not the ultimate and only access to reality. As a matter of fact, the theoretical attitude is only secondary to a more genuine and fundamental relationship, in which the focal points of the relationship are: the human being and the world.

After the emergence of phenomenology the philosophical understanding of the phenomenon of the world has completely changed. Following the first half of the 20th century the phenomenological tradition of the philosophy was able to problematize anew in its full sense the notion of the world. The reasons for this lie in the radical nature of phenomenology, since phenomenology, in my view, is a philosophy which carried out a real anthropological turn. In my view phenomenology (besides the transcendental Thomist philosophy and certain

²¹⁶ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Was ist der Mensch? Die Anthropologie der Gegenwart im Lichte der Theologie*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995: 5

²¹⁷ Without a further clarification of what I mean by phenomenology and what the characteristics of this phenomenology are, this statement seems to be an exaggeration. It was also Spiegelberg's concern how to define phenomenology, who belongs and who doesn't to the phenomenological movement. See Spiegelberg 1980, 1-6. It is clear, however, that there are many forms of phenomenology; though I claim that many common features of the immensely varied forms of phenomenology can be found. Let me just mention in short that what I call original phenomenology can be found in its most distilled form in the philosophy of the early Husserl, Max Scheler, Adolf Reinach and Dietrich von Hildebrand. This point I tried to make clear in the Introduction.

types of existentialism) is the only philosophical method which really shifted its focus on man.²¹⁸

The term anthropological turn can have various meanings. Its first meaning is when a philosophy takes anthropology, anthropological insights as its starting point and has an authentic account on man. This view doesn't reduce theology and philosophy to anthropology, but presents the phenomenon of human being as the center of all philosophical inquiries. It differs from the second type, which for example Kant held. It means a turning away from an objective world to only a life-world as constituted by subjective forms and categories. The third meaning of anthropological turn is a turning away from God. This is clearly an atheistic, and especially nowadays a post-modern view.

Along with Wolfhart Pannenberg we can say that anthropologies of all the preceding centuries considered man existing in a peaceful and unshakable coexistence with and in his world.²¹⁹ According to this view, man is a microcosm and consequently he is the image and likeness of macrocosm. Due to radical changes in world history and technology in the 20th century man's place in nature as well as his own existence suddenly became insecure, or in other words, man became his own question. As an answer to this crisis phenomenology shook what was unshakable so far, and showed that man, due to his destiny, is "alone" in the world: man faces the problem of the world. Phenomenology widened, clarified and at the same time challenged the notion of the world; it was not only the external world which could be considered as *the* world, but also his own thoughts, intentionality, his acts, the nature-world, the object-world, the other, the divine characteristics, God, etc. In my observation, therefore, if we characterize phenomenology as an attempt to re-articulate the traditional questions of

²¹⁸ To this point see Balázs M. Mezei, *The Concept of the Person in the Thought of Karol Wojtyła*. In István Cselényi – Bulcsú K. Hoppál – József Kormos (eds), *Aquinói Szent Tamás párbeszéde korunkkal*. [Saint Thomas Aquinas in Dialogue] Budapest: Mozaik, 2009, pp. 197-200. Here professor Mezei argues that the real anthropological turn was carried out not by Kant and his followers, but by Edmund Husserl and his phenomenological circle.

²¹⁹ See Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Was ist der Mensch? Die Anthropologie der Gegenwart im Lichte der Theologie*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995. Chapter 1.

the world, we also have to consider that beyond this attempt there can be find another one, namely the re-approaching of the phenomenon of the human being.

Philosophies of the 20th century, such as analytic philosophy, existentialism, and hermeneutics, also paid distinguished attention to the philosophical articulation of the notion of the world. Nevertheless, after the experience of the real crisis of the First World War, the radicality of the phenomenological philosophy, its demand for the restitution and re-definition of immediateness²²⁰ and the re-thematization of the main problems of traditional philosophy enabled phenomenology to carry out its project also in the context of the problems of the world.

In this chapter I would like to reflect on the views on the notion of the world of the central figure of the phenomenological movement. What I am going to provide here is not a full report on his views, rather short commentaries, which serves as a historical-introductory preliminary to the understanding of the phenomenon of the world.

In Edmund Husserl's account the world is the horizon of horizons. For Husserl, our relationship with the world comprises sets of implications, where these implications are not always conscious, but can be actualized by the help of reflexive/reflective acts. It is therefore obvious that in our reflection on the world passive and active as well as hidden and non-reflected aspects will play a decisive role. We are related to the world in whatever cognition – says Husserl. Now, our freedom and the knowledge concerning the horizon(s) enable us to transcend particular horizons. The horizons make possible the move and from time to time the possibility of self-situation of the subjectivity. The world is therefore the horizon of horizons, which comprises all the possible particular horizons.

²²⁰ The notion of immediateness pertains to the philosophical vocabulary of Martin Heidegger. Nevertheless, I think that this notion also loses its deep meaning if we don't provide a realist interpretation to it.

Along with other philosophers²²¹ Husserl was extremely interested in the epistemological errors of human being. His question was, how can we fail, how can we err, if we naturally inhabit the world and in a certain sense we possess the totality of being? I think that his question is twofold: “How can we err?” and “What is the bearer or basis of our inadequacy?” It is clear that our existence contains many elements of fragility. Our experiences show that we can err, even if the objects are given in the world as an *a priori* horizon. On the one hand, our experiences of objects are situated in the position of identity and difference, on the other hand, experiences of objects are not primary or firsthand experiences, but are transmitted by other objects. It is therefore the main characteristic of our existence that our demands, our projections, our will to grasp objects intellectually fail in most of the cases. In spite of this, however, our fundamental orientation towards the world never ends: all experiences of inadequacy strengthen the experience of world-horizon.

According to Husserl, the world as context and horizon is not given to us in the mode of objectivity. Objects are given in the modus of objectivity (*Gegenständlichkeit*), whereas the world is not. ‘Objectivizations’ take place in the horizon-like structure of the world. Husserl's main distinction lies between the modus of being of the objects and the modus of being of the world: experiencing, encountering objects – even if this experience is a misleading one, or turns out to be again an inadequacy – the experience of the world-horizon remains indispensable even if the experience of the horizon cannot be objectified as is the case, for example, of objects. Within the all-embracing horizon of the world particularities, other limited world-horizons, the world of things, the cultural world, etc., take place, but “despite the plurality of individual worlds [...], Husserl always insists that all such worlds must be conceived as part of a single world. There is and can be, for him, only *one* world.”²²²

²²¹ Such as Descartes, other medieval thinker, Rosmini and Balduin Schwarz. See Balduin Schwarz, *Das Problem des Irrtums in der Philosophie*. Münster: Aschaffenburg, 1934

²²² Dermot Moran, *Edmund Husserl. Founder of Phenomenology*. Cambridge: Polity, 2005: 199.

There are some critics who say that Husserl withdraws the “world” from the territory of the traditional conceptual analysis and speaks of a “new concept”, which “governs the totality of entities”.²²³ Whatever we think of this interpretation, it is true that for Husserl, even in the “natural attitude”, (*Einstellung*) the world and the things appear in the structure of mediatedness.²²⁴ It is the indispensable character of our worldly life that we encounter and face objects within the frameworks of “natural objectivism”, where objects are mediated and not immediately grasped. This is what Husserl calls the general thesis of the natural attitude. Husserl and the phenomenological movement are not exclusively interested in facticity, or in facts in themselves as quasi fundamentals, but in the a priori rationality beyond facts. For Husserl, and I think it's true for all phenomenologist, facts are only first steps to the real (or, in a transcendental phenomenological interpretation, transcendental) experience.

We have seen so far that the philosophical investigation of immediateness and the analysis of the notion of intentionality of the mind bring us closer to a “new” concept of the world. According to Husserl, a philosophy concentrating exclusively on intentionality is able to thematize properly the nature of subjectivity and the world. It means that if we concentrate on the constitution of the mind, which manifests itself in the immediate intentional acts of the mind, we will see that intentional relationships bear the character of immediateness. And this is the way (the unfolding of the notion of the ego) we have to follow to unfold the (new) notion of the world.

In the *Ideas* Husserl speaks about the “natural world” as the correlate of the mind and of the eidetic content of this world. In the *Ideas*, it seems that we can prescind from the “entirety of the natural world” as well as the whole “reality”.

In the pages of the *Crisis*-book, however, we find signs of another Husserl. This is not surprising, since Husserl in this book carries out one single project: he argues that the

²²³ See Ludwig Landgrebe, “Lebenswelt und Geschichtlichkeit des menschlichen Daseins”, in Bernhard Waldenfels (Ed.), *Phänomenologie und Marxismus*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp 1977: 16.

²²⁴ Mediatedness however presupposes the more fundamental immediateness.

scientific understanding of man cannot be grasped with the methods of the modern specialized sciences (*Fachwissenschaften*). On the basis of this anthropological context we can understand why Husserl introduces and applies the notion of life-world instead of the “simple” notion of the world. Here, the life-world, as the pre-given horizon of experience, is by its necessity non-thematized; on the other hand, however, it defines the limits of all kinds of experience.

Husserl distinguishes life-world from the world of the natural attitude. In the natural attitude the world is given as objectivity in contrast to man who is a distinct subjectivity. In the natural attitude man lives in his everyday world in a naïve manner. The notion of the life-world is relevant in this context as well, since all the historical analyses of the *Crisis*-book of Husserl²²⁵ concerned the life-world of the natural attitude. Moreover, as a final consequence, he says that life-world manifests itself in the historically developing sciences as an always presupposed a priori.

Husserl says in the *Crisis* that the problem of the life-world is the principal problem of all sciences.²²⁶ In contrast to the method of abstraction applied in the objective sciences, the reflection on the life-world investigates the *way* (the *how*) of experiences. For this we need the epoché of the subjective sciences as well as of the natural attitude. This bracketing will result in the “total change” of the natural attitude.²²⁷ Within this is manifested the correlation of the objective world given in the natural attitude and the (world) mind pertaining to this world.²²⁸ Here Husserl's main question is: how is the world constituted for the mind pertaining to the world?²²⁹ To answer this question one has to apply the ontology of the life-world by which one can unfold constant elements of the ever changing subjective life-world.

²²⁵ See Husserl *Crisis* 9.§ and the Appendices I-III.

²²⁶ *Crisis* III/A

²²⁷ *Crisis* VI, 39.§

²²⁸ *Crisis* VI, 41.§

²²⁹ 47-51.§

Now, Husserl never completed this project, and it is still unclear whether Husserl identified the notion of the world with the life-world or not. His texts suggest that we have once again to ask the question: what's the point of calling attention to the problem of the transcendental ego world? What's the point of denoting the empire of the ego with the very same expression, if the ego receives its self determination from constantly referring back to the world? There might be a serious reason for that. I think that the point of the discussion is that the life-world would investigate the constant and common structure of the subject living in the world, in the ontology of the life-world, however, we have to prescind precisely from the very same subject living in the world.

To sum up, we can say that in Husserl we find at least five different concepts of the world.

1. Husserl takes the notion of the world first in the sense of concrete life-worlds.

There are many life-worlds, taken in the widest sense of the word. Concrete life-worlds, such as my life-world when I am working on a paper, or the life-world of the professor, who supervises the very same work. There are also the life-worlds of other worldly situations: life-worlds of house-keepers, life-worlds of philosophers, life-worlds of children in kindergarten.

2. According to Husserl, there is a life-world preceding science. This type of the life-world is defined in contrast to the phenomenological attitude. Being in the life-world of the natural attitude we don't question (or in other words, bracket) our convictions concerning being and cognition. This is the life-world of naiveté, or in other words, a life-world under-clarified.²³⁰

3. In contrast to the genuine philosophy, that is, to phenomenology, there can be found in the Husserlian corpus a pre-philosophical or pre-phenomenological

²³⁰ This first two types of life-world is almost identical what Bernhard Waldenfels applies in his understanding of life-world. See Bernhard Waldenfels, *Einführung in die Phänomenologie*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1992. pp. 36-37.

life-world. This life-world is defined as a counterpart of the life-world of phenomenology. When, for example, Husserl criticizes Scheler, he claims that Scheler did not pay enough attention to the whole process of unfolding the essential elements of knowledge; consequently, his conclusions are mistaken.

4. There are life-worlds in Husserl which can constitute one single life-world. Life-worlds like talking, eating, sleeping or playing of the same person can formulate one life-world, and this is what we call the life-world of the person. For example the world of my personality, or more precisely, my world is constituted of many (as a matter of fact no one can tell how many) life-worlds. Even if I am not aware all of my life-worlds – since the claim of being aware of all the situations of my life is simply impossible – I do possess a world, I am walking my path, living in my world: I do possess a world, which belongs exclusively to me.
5. The fifth type of life-world is the opposite of the fourth type. This kind of life-world is that what Husserl calls the “material a priori”. This life-world answers the question of the basis of different life-worlds.²³¹

Finally we can ask why is the philosophical articulation of the notion of the world important? At the beginning of this chapter I mentioned that phenomenology is an attempt to re-articulate the traditional questions of the world. I also said that phenomenology, on the other hand, is interested not only in the phenomenon of the world, but, in a final analysis, in man. It is the fundamental anthropological orientation of phenomenology, which enables us to give an anthropological interpretation to the Husserlian notion of world and life-world. Without presupposing the anthropological character of the life-world, we would miss the

²³¹ These last two types of life-worlds are the explication of Waldenfels' (Waldenfels identifies three different types of life-world) last type of life-world. See Bernhard Waldenfels, *Einführung in die Phänomenologie*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1992: 38.

point of the philosophical development of the “beloved pupil”. Heidegger’s views on the problem are discussed in a separate chapter.²³²

²³² See chapter 2.5.

3.4. The natural World

In this chapter we would like to know whether the natural world can be considered as a real object of man's world-openness. If it can be the object of man's world-openness, in what sense does it differ from other possible objects. In short, we would like to know whether man can be defined solely by the natural world or man is open to something else (higher realities) than the natural world.

The Pre-Socratic philosophy is called the philosophy of nature because it seeks for the ultimate material elements out of which the world (*kosmos*) is built. Even in the Pre-Socratic philosophy, but this is true also for today, nature and natural things stand in contrast to things made by men. According to Aristotle (in his book "Physics", that is "On Nature"), nature is the origin of the change and stability of a thing. Now, discussing things being a compound of matter and form we encounter the problem of the final cause of nature and finally the problem of the unmoved mover. For Aristotle, the main point is always the final cause of things (where any scientific investigation must finally stop, *anagké stenai*) and not only the proximate cause. In his ethics nature has a different meaning: it is a tendency, an original *conatus* of man untouched by education and civil law, which is supposed to be fostered by ethics in order to arrive at man's natural end. In both of its meanings, nature for the Greeks is something that is in need of a higher completion. Nature is unable to fulfill its own needs without assistance of others. This is a very important observation of the Greek mind, especially of Aristotle, who placed nature into the context of teleology. This position has been prevalent throughout centuries.

In the everyday usage nature has a similar meaning. In its first meaning nature is used to refer to the intact status of man's surroundings. We denote with the term "nature" a forest or a national park, for example, which is unpolluted and undestroyed by man. In the second

meaning nature is the totality of things of the universe altogether with man. In both cases there can be observed a supposed hidden opposition between nature and man. Nature is usually contrasted to man, where man is the one who exploits nature. Views of the proponents of exploitability of the world has been disputed by many modern philosophers, who hold that man is not the “chosen vessel” of God or cosmos, but part of the nature, therefore has no rights to exploit it.²³³

In short, we can say that the phenomenon what we call nature has two main characteristics. Firstly, nature is always something that is not self-sufficient. It means that nature cannot give account for itself, that is, cannot give account for its being and so-being. “Being not self-sufficient” also means that nature is meaningless without an ultimate intelligibility, what we traditionally call God. Secondly, nature is always for something. Being for something means that none of the elements of nature fully justify themselves, and there is an invisible connection between all its elements. This is what connects one part and element to another, and holds the whole universe together. Nature, however, is not only in its parts for something, but also in itself as a whole is for something.

Now, from the point of view of man’s openness we would say that insofar as man is open to this kind of world (in fact he is open to it), he is not open to it in the sense (God-openness) we would like to expound in the thesis. Even if man’s biological body is composed of natural, worldly constituents, and he is “con-natural” with nature, it does not mean that he is open only to the world of nature. Man, however, is not only of this world, not only of the biological, physical nature. His biological composition, intellectual enterprises, questions overreach the borders of nature and his experiences gained through the world of nature.

On the other hand, man cannot exist “naturally” in the world of nature as other creatures can. Jean-Jacques Rousseau describes the state of nature so enthusiastically that he

²³³ See the views of the proponents of eco-ethics or eco-phenomenology, such as Tomonobu Imamichi’s *An Introduction to Eco-ethica* or Peter J. McCormick’s *When Famine Returns* or *The Negative Sublime* of the same author.

fails to see that this state had never existed in the form as he depicts it. Rousseau held that human beings can live according to their original and natural character happily, peacefully and freely; especially freely from the disease and deformation of the society. According to Rousseau, living originally and naturally means to live in a peaceful coexistence with the nature as it was in the distant past in an idealistic form, untouched by man. Rousseau does not take account of the fact that even his “noble savages” also create and maintain culture, even if it is not as sophisticated as what we call culture today. By the term culture I mean every kind of framing nature and natural circumstances. Gehlen, Landmann, Portmann, Rothacker²³⁴ and of course Marx all agree that one has to find man’s definition in culture (which constitutes man’s “second nature”). In contrast to this, I think that man’s definition by culture provides an unsatisfactory view. It is true that man cannot live without culture; man – urged by his very essence – wants to live in the artificial world of culture. Consequently, man’s universe unfolds itself in the interaction of man and the world of nature. As a matter of fact, there is nothing natural for man in the world of nature: everything without exception is alien for man. The more he creates himself by the help of his culture, the stronger powers drive man further and further, faster and faster, deeper and deeper. The perpetual development and transitional mark of culture indicates that man’s vocation surpasses culture. We cannot explain the abundance and variety of spiritual and material goods, artifacts created by man without the presupposition of the “overflow of the creativity of man”. This, however, means that man’s aim is over the world of nature. Even if the first object of his creativity is the world of nature, the real nature of his strivings, searches show that man doesn’t inhabit the nature by nature nor its counterpart, culture. Nevertheless, man is natural as well as a cultural being, that is, what builds up man is partly natural and cultural, but it is not only nature and culture that defines his existence.

²³⁴ See A. Portmann: *Biologische Fragmente zu einer Lehre vom Menschen*. Basel 1951. A. Portmann, *Biologie und Geist*. Freiburg: 1956. E. Rothacker, *Philosophische Anthropologie*. Bonn: 1966. M. Landmann, *Philosophische Anthropologie*. Berlin: 1969.

On the other hand, in the investigation of the peculiarities of man's openness to natural world we have to take into consideration that there is a certain tension between man and the nature. Man is, however, fighting with nature. Culture and social order compensate man's organic vulnerability in the struggle against nature. Animals can live in a peaceful harmony with nature, whereas for man nature is alien and he is also alien to nature. Man, as a matter of fact, wants to become free of the natural world. This is the reason of man's "second nature", culture: man creates "second nature", because he wants to be delivered from nature, natural condition.

In short, since in man one can observe a disposition to go beyond nature, the proper object and aim of his openness and personal needs have to be beyond man and nature as well.

The world of nature is not enough for man. For man nature is like a "small room", where nothing can find its proper place, where there is always disorder. Man's encounter with the natural world is in fact an exceptional experience. This experience can provide significant contribution for self-knowledge, which says that man is not from the world of nature, but supernatural. This insight, however, does not suggest leaving and despising the world as Manichaeism or Sartre would do. For Sartre having contact with the external natural world causes a kind of feeling of disgust in man which he calls *nausea*. For Sartre *nausea* is a natural concomitant of physical existence. He says,

This perpetual apprehension on the part of my for-itself of an *insipid* taste which I cannot place, which accompanies me even in my efforts to get away from it, and which is *my* taste – this is what we have described elsewhere under the name of *Nausea*. A dull and inescapable nausea perpetually reveals my body to my consciousness.²³⁵

Sartre's *nausea* produces vomiting he says; I think however that it is not only the natural physical world which produces vomiting for Sartre, but the whole world as such. Sartre simply dislikes to inhabit the world. In contrast to Sartre's view I would say that the natural

²³⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology*. New York: Citadel Press, 2001: 314.

world offer us a unique possibility to apprehend man's contingency. The natural world is a "task" for man and not something utterly evil, that one should despise. This last statement has a postulate: one can utter this insofar as one holds that man is open also to something other and higher than the natural world.

3.5. The Object-World

In this chapter we will investigate whether the object-world can be considered as a real and final object of the phenomenon what we called man's world-openness. If the object-world can be the object of man's world-openness, in what sense does it differ from other possible objects and what are the peculiar characteristics of being open to the object-world. In other words, we would like to know whether man can be defined solely by his or her object-world or man is open to something else than the object-world.

In the previous chapter we referred to Jean-Paul Sartre's disgust of the physical-natural world. His feeling of *nausea* can be applied without further ado to the object-world as well. *Nausea* in this sense can refer to everything that belongs to the world. It is undeniable that man's primary harsh experiences with his contingency and physical existence occur through objects. In this sense, the object-world can also be the object of disgust and hatred.

There is, however, another kind of view of the object-world, which says that objects can help man to develop and aid self-knowledge. The significance of the problem of the object-world is enormous, since it is only man who can experience the world in an "objectified" manner taken in the narrow sense of the word. Now, if objects foster man's self-knowledge, then it is absolutely unjustified to hold that the object-world is abhorrent, disgusting and alien for man. Let's see what we mean by the term object-world.

Object is a generic term for whatever can be referred to or assigned. There are physical objects, real and unreal objects, abstract objects, intentional objects and many others depending on which viewpoint we take in approaching reality. Nevertheless, principally we mean by object-world things that concern man. Since everything in the world concerns man in one way or another, we can say that the objectivity of the world is our primary experience. There are objects in the world, but the world itself also manifests itself to us as an object.

Man's principal experience with objects takes place through labor. Generally we call labor all our spiritual-bodily and mental-ideal activities, which guarantee our physical existence and the reproduction of our existence in an objective-instrumental way. This activity, as all other activities of man, is to a certain degree the manifestation, that is, the objectivation of the human essence. Man's behavior, gestures, mimicry and others can manifest his inner tensions, feelings and mood. Nevertheless, these manifestations are still passive processes, since they are only a concomitant of a human activity. On the other hand, however, when man marks the world with his hands, that is, by work, then he rises above the whole bulk of concomitant gestures and behavioral tokens: man is concerned with the world more authentically. Labor is therefore an essential manifestation of man, in which his essence is reflected.²³⁶ The mediation of the objects of the world is indispensable for man's self-knowledge. Man, as a world-open being, always has to leave himself and subject himself to objects in order to look back upon himself in an objectified manner. From this peculiar point of view man can see objects of the world as well as his own place among these objects. The idea of man as objective being can be found in various authors. The Catholic Church, for example, issued numerous documents concerning labor.²³⁷ According to the Catholic teaching labour and the worker stand in the center of social and economical life. Following this train of thought, John Paul II says that labour is the participation in God's creation and manifestation of man's responsibility and creativity.²³⁸ Man realizes himself in his work – he says.²³⁹ Later John Paul II adds that since the main criterion of labour is this self-realization – and not efficacy, power and the market-value of labor, since the role of labor is primary to capital²⁴⁰ – it is unjustified to talk about equality in labor. Surprisingly we find somewhat similar idea

²³⁶ Let me add again that in labour man's essence can manifest itself but not in its totality.

²³⁷ Let me mention just a few of them: *Rerum novarum*, 1891; *Quadragesimo anno*, 1931; *Gaudium et spes*, 1965; *Laborem exercens*, 1981; *Centesimus annus*, 1991.

²³⁸ *Laborem exercens* 4-6.

²³⁹ *op. cit.* 9-10.

²⁴⁰ *op. cit.* 12-13.

concerning the object-world and labor in Karl Marx. According to Marx, man's objective nature means that man can have self-knowledge only in the material-objective world as it is opposed to him. He says:

The fact that man is an embodied, living, real, sentient, objective being with natural powers, means that he has real, sensuous objects as the objects of his being, or that he can only express his being in real, sensuous objects. To be objective, natural, sentient and at the same time to have object, nature and sense outside oneself, or to be oneself object, nature and sense for a third person, is the same thing.²⁴¹

I think we can fully agree with Marx on the significance of labor and object-world even if we cannot accept the final consequences of Marxism. My views are, however, obviously closer to the Catholic teaching. Since man can frame his surroundings according to his needs, he alters not only the surroundings but his knowledge, which he acquired regarding himself in the world. In his interaction with objects, man alters them as well as the measure to which man fits his own essence. Man has two basic experiences in his contact with objects. Firstly, man comes to know himself, in another way, as other. Secondly, man realizes that it is he and not others who can initiate changes like these. In other words, man realizes his capacities by his products. This is precisely what I called previously as contribution of objects in man's self-knowledge and self-understanding.

This view does not include any kind of fetishism of objects. It is, however, a modern trend in philosophy that man tries to find the manifestation of his inner essence in the world produced by him. The man of antiquity tried to decipher his vocation from the order of the cosmos. In the early mythical times the light of the visible world illuminated the shades of human existence. The modern man does not consider himself to be connatural with the world, but utilizes it as a raw material. There is something "cruel" in objectivization: man does not serve the world, but gains a firm hold over it. Man observes and conquers the world of objects. The modern man does not consider himself any longer in the likeness of God.

²⁴¹ Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* Karl Marx. New York: International Publishers, 1964: 154.

Especially Marxists emphasize that man sees himself in the “mirror” of his production of objects and not in the “mirror” of God. In this context, however, self-knowledge becomes an endless process, since surroundings of man theoretically can be framed *ad infinitum*. Although every new contact with the object-world is a new step toward developing the faculties of man, the closed system of object-directedness cannot explain the more fundamental openness of man.

To sum up we can say that the object-world does not comprise the totality which would be the object of man’s world-openness. In this sense the object-world cannot be the final and ultimate object of man’s world-openness. We, therefore, would fail if we try to define the human being through his openness to the object-world. In other words, the phenomenon of man’s world-openness doesn’t have its full justification in the openness to the object-world. From what we have seen, thus far, it is evident that the phenomenon of world-openness must consist in something else than just the phenomenon of being open to the object-world.

3.6. The linguistic and the cultural World

“Die Sprache ist das Haus des Seins”
(Martin Heidegger: Letter on Humanism)

In our discussion of man's openness toward various kinds of worlds, we have arrived at the analysis of a peculiar type of world, which has a tremendous philosophical relevance today, yet intuitively we immediately see that the linguistic and the cultural world cannot be the proper object of man's openness. In this chapter our question is similar as in the previous chapters. We would like to know whether the world of language and the cultural world can be considered as real and ultimate objects of man's world-openness or not. In this chapter we are interested in the nature of the worlds of language and culture in respect of the question whether they can satisfy man's world-openness. There are many thinkers who tried to grasp the essence of the human being through language and culture. In this chapter, however, we would like to know whether man can be defined solely by the cultural and linguistic world or man is open to something else, something more comprehensive than these realities.

But how do we know intuitively that the linguistic and the cultural world is not the world that we are looking for? In order to answer this question, we have to have a closer look at the linguistic and cultural world, by which the phenomenon of the linguistic and the cultural world will be manifested as absolutely different from the proper object of man's openness.

Man's peculiar openness, which distinguishes him from animals, in its final analysis entails the question of God.²⁴² It means that man over-questions everything which he sees in his world and there is no worldly entity that would absolutely alleviate his “thirst” for the absolute reality and truth. One might say that this desire of man is rather an ascetic turning away from the world, and not a real openness to the world. Man has a special vocation, independently of whether we give a theistic interpretation to this or not, man behaves like a –

²⁴² See Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Was ist der Mensch? Die Anthropologie der Gegenwart im lichte der Theologie*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1995: 13.

as many thinkers thought – “second god” in the created world. His status is endowed with lordship over the world; in a religious context we would say that man is the representative of God’s unconditional mastery.

The question is how can man secure his lordship over the world being world-open? Especially nowadays it seems that technique, engineering, and industry are signs of man’s lordship over the world. These phenomena, however, presuppose a more fundamental attitude, which finally led to the development of the language. In my view, language (and any kind of artificial worlds of man) of man is a primary, but an artificial system in order to overcome the apparent disorder in the world we experience. My thesis in this chapter is that all artificial worlds, including language and culture, are meant for man to master the immense abundance of the world he lives in. This, however, does not mean that the world in which man lives is only cultural and linguistic. In this chapter, therefore, I will argue that the real meaning of the phenomenon of world-openness, although comprises the openness to culture and language, is immeasurably more than just openness to culture and language.

Arnold Gehlen devotes the second part of his main book to the development of human perception, motion and language.²⁴³ He says that man, because of his openness, confronts the world. Since man has a vulnerable nature, man’s first task is to orientate himself in this “chaotic” world. In contrast to animals that are lead by their instincts, man creates an artificial world. According to Gehlen, by the help of this artificial world man can control the stream of sensations and stimuli. On the other hand, however, reaching the mastery over external stimuli also means mastery over oneself.

We can fully agree with Gehlen in his views on man’s symbolic nature of perception. It means that human perception, because of its symbolic nature, multiplies our sensory

²⁴³ Arnold Gehlen, *Der Mensch: seine Natur und seine Stellung in der Welt*. Athenäum: Frankfurt am Main, 1966. pp. 149-387. Wolfhart Pannenberg also dedicates the second chapter of his famous book, *Was ist der Mensch?*, to language and culture, the reason however why I prefer to expound here Gehlen’s views is that Gehlen’s starting point is similar to mine, yet, he has dissimilar consequences, which makes a comparison easier.

observations; it arranges and locates them. Things are arranged and located when it is enough just to cast a glance at them and we immediately know and remember their function. With this the world becomes perspicuous. In the meantime there can be observed a growth in the number of known and located things and relationships; *a fortiori* man is open to the reception of other symbols. Now, Gehlen explains the evolution of language by the help of the notion of easing (*Entlastung*) and biological expedience. Here we cannot tell whether Gehlen's theory of the biological origin of language is true or not, one point, however, is clear and we can accept: language, as an artificial universe, expands the range of the symbolic world. Gehlen holds the biological origin of language – which I cannot accept –, and adds that sound is the most basic communicational means of the pronounced language. For him language comes into being in the interaction of sound and the symbolic world of perception.

In a certain sense, if we hold (with Gehlen) that man creates artificial worlds in order to overcome the chaos or unintelligible nature of the external world, it is (incontrast to Gehlen) unnecessary to distinguish between sounds, words, sentences within the virtual world of language, since sounds, as the most basic formulas in language, have to be considered a perfect virtual world in the same way as the most complex texts. In this sense there is no difference between sounds, sentences and culture (culture taken in the sense of a very complex artificial world). From the point of view of the essence of language, there is no difference between the language of a babbling child and the language of a polyglot professor.²⁴⁴ There is, however, a difference between the language of man and animals. I think it is totally unfounded to hold that animals can have language in the same way as human beings can have, because the animal openness does not share common fundamental

²⁴⁴ Cf. hereinafter p. 208.

characteristics with the human openness, consequently animals are not in need of overcoming the “chaos”.²⁴⁵

From the process that child goes through to learn a language, we can have important insights relating to the phenomenon of man’s openness to the world. Children connect certain recurring objects with determinate sounds. Later this connection will form a constant bond. This phenomenon is in strong connection with man’s “objectivity”: man is – almost absolutely – free from instinctive reactions and external and internal things do not compel automatic answers. Children are able distinguish between objects and are able to name them not forgetting the relation between the name and the thing. Even if it is a simple sound, it is a self-manifestation and self-revelation of man. Children give voice to their curiosity in things. This is the origin of language, and, as a matter of fact, philosophically speaking this is already *the* full language, which differs from the matured, developed language only in its complexity.²⁴⁶ Children express their aliveness, their free and indefinite orientedness to the world, and their life contrasted to the world and things. In other words, children articulate the development of their outward-oriented essence. The expression of our experiences, desires, emotions is an original human wish, which is crucial in the development of language. This means, however, that man wants to communicate himself. On the other hand – and this is the point of our whole discussion – man can communicate himself insofar as he is open to the world, and man can communicate himself insofar as his openness exists in reality. In other words, if there is no openness, the wish of communication would not exist either. Nevertheless, according to our observations, language and communication exist; and this is a very strong argument for man’s essential openness.

²⁴⁵ For animals there is no chaos in the world. Their needs and the responses are balanced. Since animals do not possess freedom in the sense that human beings do, but are controlled by their instincts, for them everything is in order in the world. The animal world, that is, their surroundings is a perfect “answer” to their needs. For animals there is no need for transcending the limits determined by instincts.

²⁴⁶ We have to emphasise the fact of man’s capability of communication independently of the complexity or factual manifestation of his language. If we deny this, we have to deny the human dignity of unborn babes, infants, and paralyzed persons, who are incapable of using a full-fledged language.

In this sense, sentences and other compound grammatical structures have no more philosophical value than a simple sound, the first articulation of man's communicative self-revelation can have. The central character of language can be observed even in case of the simplest sound: language correlates us with moments of reality and constitutes a "middle world", which makes clear (that is, intelligible) the turbulent multiplicity of the world. It facilitates understanding and provides a preliminary order in the world. It is the language, which upbuilds our inner world. This can be evoked whenever we wish, independently of the external world. Language, however, is not identical with thinking; without language, however, we couldn't think. Without exception all men think and dream or speak, if he or she can, in a certain language. It is due to the language that the human being can surpass the limitations of space and time, and also his own memories; by the help of the language things can be evoked (or can be put to silence) helping to find the right way in man's life between Scylla and Charybdis. We are indebted to language for having relations with things and understanding them deeper – in a wider context – than they can appear. Language, as we have seen so far, however, is not self-sufficient; there is always the open existence of man behind it. In short, man's openness finds language, and not the other way around.

What has been said so far explains the relation of language and culture. The quintessence of culture is the expediently organized interaction with things of the world, which presupposes language. Gehlen's main concept is the easing (*Entlastung*)-function of language and culture. He says that language eases man's acts and helps man testing thousands of theories and plans without confronting the world.²⁴⁷ In my view, however, language essentially has to do with the factual world as well as with data which are beyond mere facticity. The principal role of language is to reflect the world (whatever we mean by the term

²⁴⁷ Arnold Gehlen *op.cit.* pp. 590.;592.;602.;605.;628.;672.;721.

world) and not hiding it. Language, as well as culture, however, couldn't fulfill this task if there is not a preceding openness of the human being to the totality of the world.

Culture is also an artificial²⁴⁸ world of man in order to overcome the disordered nature of world. In other words culture is the shaping of the world. Culture in the first sense stands in contrast with biological nature of man and has been used to distinguish man from animals. The biological nature of man is a synonym for natural state of man, which – as I am arguing in this chapter – does not exist in its pure form. Everywhere where there is man, there is language and culture. Each culture is a pattern to answer the question of the world. Culture, however, concerns the everyday world and its entities. It also shapes the world, or at least, it shapes the world more radically than language can do. If we want to trace culture back to its source, we can say that it is the same as in the case of language: man's essential openness evokes creating material, spiritual and intellectual culture. If we have a look only at the countless number of artifacts which man has produced and will be producing, it must be admitted that man's demands surpass what he will ever be able to produce. No one can say that one day there will be no poetry and sculpture. Even if there have been geniuses in poetry, who are matchless, such as Shakespeare, it won't keep the next generations from writing, in most of the cases, terrible poems. Culture is in substantive connection with man's infinite vocation, which is manifested in art, law, ethics, religion, and as a matter of fact in all worldly activities of man.

In this chapter we characterized the development of language as the paradigm and prototype of human culture. We have seen that man creates artificial worlds, which help to overcome his confused surroundings. This does not mean that there is a kind of irresolvable antagonism between the world and man. We have said in the previous chapter (chapter 3.5.),

²⁴⁸ In this context I call all worlds artificial insofar as these worlds are shaped and created in whatever form *by man*. As a matter of fact these worlds wouldn't have an antonym, because theoretically there are no "places", life-worlds, which would exist independently of man. This view comes from the insight that man creates language and culture; there is no world without man and his culture.

referring to the similar problem, that the mediation of objects of the world is indispensable for man's self-understanding. Similarly, we can say that – even if the world is chaotic and confused – this world is not alien to man (and vice versa), but serves as the only “place” for man's self-knowledge. Man acquired the world by a free gift of God for developing his self-knowledge. In the light of this thought we can have a better understanding of the concept of being created in God's likeness. If we say that world is the only and proper place of man's self-knowledge, we claim at the same time the connaturality of man and the world. Consequently, everything that helps man to his self-knowledge is his partner and not an object of exploitation.²⁴⁹

We have also said that language as well as culture can be conceived as artificial, symbolic worlds, which give answer to man's fundamental openness. Among the numerous artificial worlds, religion is the most comprehensive and most appropriate to make the world intelligible and perspicuous for man. Religion is the quest for reality; it is a searching for answers for the basic questions of man. In this sense, it is undeniable that religion arises from the very essence of man. This however does not lessen the significance of culture and language, since the system of elaboration and cultivation of natural things aims at the satisfaction of man's needs.

The original question of this chapter was whether language and culture is the proper object of man's openness. According to the preceding analysis, it seems that language and culture constitute an essential part of man's existence. In this sense language is indeed the place and the house of being,²⁵⁰ in which man can develop his capacities and talents. Man, in his openness, is open also to language as to many other things, man's openness, however,

²⁴⁹ So, we can answer those who hold that the world is a mere object of science and man is empowered to exploit it. But we can also overcome the views of those who have a certain aversion to the world and hold that the first and principal experience of man's worldly life is anxiety (Heidegger) and disgust (Sartre).

²⁵⁰ See Martin Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism*. (Trans. Miles Groth) www.wagner.edu/departments/psychology/filestore2/download/101/MartinHeideggerLETTER_ON_HUMANISM.pdf (last retrieve: 20.06.2009.)

surpasses the limitations of language. The phenomenon of language “volubly” refers to a wider context: man is open to God in language as well as in culture. In this sense Heidegger is right saying that language constitutes an essential part of the human being. Language, however, doesn’t refer only to being and doesn’t assist to sound man’s relation only to being, but, in its finite nature, refers to a higher reality.

3.7. The social World

In this chapter we would like to understand the connection between man's openness and the phenomenon of the social world. In this chapter we are interested in the nature of the social world, since we would like to know whether the social world can be considered as an ultimate, proper object of man's world-openness. In short, we would like to know whether man can be defined only by the phenomenon of the social world or man is open to some higher reality than the social world. The problematization is again the same as in the previous chapters: it seems that the social world is the proper (and according to some thinkers, the only) object of man's world-openness. We would like to know whether this view is justified or not.

Social relations of man are in strong connection with his material relations. There is no social formation that would be independent of materiality, since the order of social structures also defines the way we are supposed to deal with materiality. On the one hand, one can observe a constant change in the cultural-social world, on the other hand – and it is also an observation –, man always tries to sustain himself in this changing world. A double and mutual interaction can be seen between man and his social world: man shapes the social world, but the social world can also shape man. Changes in the social world result in the formation of further forms of human life. It seems, however, that it is always the man who is the standard of all changes and not the social world. Wolfhart Pannenberg calls this mutual impact “social process”. In this process, says Pannenberg, man's relation to the nature is interwoven more and more into the social relationships between human beings.²⁵¹ Karl Rahner emphasizes rather man's historical nature. He says that man is an essentially historical

²⁵¹ See Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Was ist der Mensch? Die Anthropologie der Gegenwart im Lichte der Theologie*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995.

being, since he received revelation in history and must realize his nature in history.²⁵² Either way we proceed, we must acknowledge that the conformation of social (and historical) process is of vital importance regarding man's vocation.

On the basis of our previous anthropological investigations we can say that man is a spirit, but in his worldly existence he is undeniably connected with sensibility (in the sense of Latin *sensus*, or in the sense of the German *sinnliche Erfahrung*) and man is a socio-historical being. From the viewpoint of man's openness to the totality of the world and God and his connectedness to senses and sense experience we can say that man's transcendental self-reflection and self-knowledge necessarily takes place in an objectifying manner. It is of utmost importance, therefore, to analyze the notion of historicity, since man realizes himself in the social context of history. In this sense, man encounters his own essence where he faces history and the social world: in his transcendence, more precisely, where he transcends history and the cultural world. Here, historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*) means basic structure of man, in which he is in time and is opposed to the world. Having a historical nature is a peculiar challenge, and at the same time, a task for man. Man fulfills his task when he interacts with the world: modifies it, changes the world into his own world. The stress must be laid upon the fact of *acts* of the human being, for the reason that man is – using Karol Wojtyla's term – an “acting person”.²⁵³ For Wojtyla, the person manifests himself in action. John F. Crosby gives a very good summary of Wojtyla's idea of the acting person:

Wojtyla has pointed out personal acting by contrasting it with a certain opposite: he contrasts what is merely happening in man, “such as feeling hunger or thirst”, with “what man does himself”; in other words he contrasts undergoing or enduring with acting through oneself (very much as Aquinas contrasts *aguntur* with *per se agunt*). He calls the former “activations” and reserves for the latter the term “acting.” This leads him to follow many recent authors in distinguishing between “person” and “nature” in the makeup of human beings, person being the principle of acting through

²⁵² See Karl Rahner, *Hörer des Wortes: Schriften zur Religionsphilosophie und zur Grundlegung der Theologie*. (bearbeitet von Albert Raffelt) Solothurn: Benziger Verlag, 1997.

²⁵³ Karol Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*. Dordrecht / Boston / London: D. Reidel, 1979.

oneself, nature the more passive principle of undergoing. We, too, want to make our own this contrast of person and nature. It is a personalistic way of expressing the peculiar “mixed” character of man, that is, the fact that in him there is something coming from above and something coming from the earth, something of “spirit” and something of “matter”.²⁵⁴

In Wojtyla’s philosophy of the person action becomes efficacy. In order to understand it, one has to distinguish between the classical understanding of the notion of *ineffabilitas* and its dynamic conception. According to the classical understanding, man has an incommunicable inner, static essence: the *ineffabilitas* is within man. According to the other view, man is “outside” himself; his acts, as manifestations of his personality (which are also incommunicable), have an outward direction, which, however, essentially belong to man. Now, in Wojtyla, the inner core, the essence of man receives a dynamic interpretation: man realizes himself through his acts.²⁵⁵

Now, the meaning of historicity and man’s openness to the social world has to be taken precisely in the sense as we have seen above. According to this, man is essentially a social being, since he has to realize himself through his acts in the context of the social and historical world. In this sense, the phenomenon of the social world is a task for man, yet, man, because of his contingency, can never be through with it. This, however, does not mean that man cannot transcend the sequence of social-historical events. His failure of being through with the social world shows his real openness surpassing finite, though immense, social happenings. Man belongs to the social world, he is a social being, but decisions of his freedom always transcend it toward the direction of the final definiteness. From this it follows that the social world is in need of a higher justification that the dynamics of the social world cannot provide in itself. In a religious context we would say that it is divine salvation, which

²⁵⁴ John F. Crosby, *The Selfhood of the Human Person*. Washington: Catholic University Press, 1996: 38.

²⁵⁵ In another book Wojtyla claims that the Aristotelian metaphysics of human nature runs the risk of “reducing man to the world”, of failing to do justice to the *proprium* of man, to what distinguishes him as a person. The cosmological focus of Aristotle needs to be completed by a more personalist focus. He says that “new” terms like subjectivity, self-presence, self-donation should replace terms like substance, potentiality, rationality. See Karol Wojtyla, *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, New York: Peter Lang, 1993. pp. 209-217.

would consummate man's social being showing the ultimate aim of the social world. This view says that man is open to the social world, but since the world is finite and contingent in its social structure, man has to turn to another reality, which can provide a sufficient explanation of the ultimate aim of the social-historical world. According to Karl Rahner and the transcendental Thomist tradition, historicity belongs to man's basic structure (*Grundbestimmung*): man's historicity as theological concept means, that man is open to God's free will so that he will await his and his world's salvation from a historical-personal event.²⁵⁶ Now, along the same lines with Rahner's thought we also want to give a theistic reading to man's participation in and openness to the social world. Social processes are of high importance regarding man's place in the world. Man cannot realize the unity and integrity of his existence without well-balanced and consistent relation to the world and others. In this sense, man can approach step by step his aim through social processes.

There is another philosophical attempt to understand man's place in the social world. It has been a long-discussed question in philosophy whether man moves toward his aim in the course of social changes or deviates from it. There are numerous philosophers, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Arthur Schopenhauer, Friedrich Nietzsche, Oswald Spengler and many others, who doubted in social progress. According to them, civilization is a dead end for humanity. The majority of the thinkers, however, are of the opinion that social process is apparently positive; it is a progress and not only a degeneration. According to Condorcet, Herder, Hegel, Lessing and others, in the course of social evolution the division between the human race and the individual will disappear. Herder says for example, that progress is not only an appearance; humanity develops physically as well as politically.

Immanuel Kant was also of the opinion that social progress is the "hidden plan of nature". Nevertheless, it seems that progress sometimes is against the will of the individual.

²⁵⁶ See Karl Rahner, *Hörer des Wortes: Schriften zur Religionsphilosophie und zur Grundlegung der Theologie*. (bearbeitet von Albert Raffelt) Solothurn: Benziger Verlag, 1997.

According to Kant, the solution of the paradox is to be found in the fact that the idea of progress concerns humanity and not the individual. Kant says in his philosophy of history that identification of the individual with humanity will dissolve freedom. Furthermore, if there is no freedom and everything is a natural mechanism then politics can indeed make use of this mechanism for dominating individuals. Our experiences, however, show that “we are dealing with beings that act freely, to whom, it is true, what they ought to do may be dictated in advance, but of whom it may not be predicted what they will do.”²⁵⁷ For Kant rejection of the natural attitude can help to overcome the opposition of nature and freedom as well as the opposition of humanity and the individual. Kant cannot accept the naturalistic view of progress and holds that progress will not change man’s nature by course of natural law. Nevertheless, there is progress, which concerns man’s history and his nature. Kant emphasizes that history is the progress of humanity toward the development of its real nature. The aim of this progress is the perfect civil constitution of the state, which can guarantee individual freedom.

According to Karl Marx, social circumstances withhold the development of the real humanity of man. The aim of Marx is therefore to change radically the inhuman relations and to develop a real humanism. In Marx progress is a task in the world-history for man. Later Marxist thinkers modified Marx’s thought and, influenced by the developments of chemistry and physics of the 20th century, held that progress is also a visible physical evolution of humankind. The new “Soviet type of man”, is the one who not only possesses a faith in the organizing power of reason, but is able consciously and mathematically to build himself up and his society.²⁵⁸ According to this view, the self-realization of the Soviet “*homo novus*” depends exclusively on man.

²⁵⁷ Immanuel Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*. University of Nebraska Press, 1992: 149.

²⁵⁸ To Lenin, for example, the creating of the Soviet Union was more the remaking of Russia and a problem of anthropology than a problem of class struggle.

Now, my critique concerns precisely this point. Firstly, it seems that man on his own cannot be the source and the aim of his own self-realization. Even if man has to do essentially with the social world, it does not mean that a perfect social world would be the ultimate end of humanity. Secondly, if we say that man is open to the social world, we have to ask what kind of a social world it is. We would be happy to give the example of a perfect society in world history. That kind of a perfect society that could be the object of man's openness, however, has never existed. We can hold up societies as a model, which were perfect with respect to the organization of the society. The Incan, Mayan, Egyptian, or Sumer theocratic states as well as the Nazi and Soviet Empires were very well organized. The good organization of a state, however, does not imply that the society or the social world in question is a perfect one. Thirdly, nowadays no one can argue with the question of unjust social circumstances, the social alienation of man, and inhuman policies. Criticism of and intervention in these situations has no justification if we do not previously suppose that man is open to eternal reality. Fourthly, if we face social inequality, unauthorized aggressive power, and the continuous repression of human rights we have to intervene and we have to fight against it. This does not mean that social world will bring redemption for man in his socio-cultural and socio-historical stance. Being prompted by humanity, one has to act even if one's ultimate end is not of the social world, since without deeds humanism is a self-deceit, and religiosity is hypocrisy. Fifthly, even if this social world is not the only place of man's self-realization and we clearly see that man is unable on his own to achieve self-realization, we cannot disregard the consequences and effects of socio-economic processes. No one can think seriously about man not taking into account the social world. We can say therefore that man is open to the social world, yet, it isn't the final object of his openness. The ultimate completion is found beyond the social world.

To sum up we can say that evolutionist, Marxist and any similar views on the nature of man run the risk of reducing man to one single phenomenon of the world, to its social aspect. Man, however, is not only an *animal sociale*, and those who think that man can be defined by his social circumstances fail to do justice to the characteristic element of the human being. In his openness, however, as this short investigation has illustrated, not the openness to the social world, but his openness to the divine reality is what distinguishes him.

3.8. The World of the Non-being and Fiction

“Omnes scientiae et artes ordinantur ad unum,
scilicet ad perfectionem hominis”
(Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*,)

This chapter is dedicated to the unfolding of the connection between the phenomenon of man's world-openness and the phenomenon of the world of non-being and fiction. Here the hermeneutical point of departure is similar as in the previous chapters: we suppose that the phenomenon of world-openness' proper object is the world of non-being and fiction. In this chapter, however, we will argue that the proprium of man cannot be characterized by being open to the world of non-being and fiction. We will argue that all definitions will fail insofar as it understands man's world-openness in a reductionist way and reduces it to the openness to the world of non-being and fiction.

The term fiction indicates at least two meanings. In the first sense fiction is a type of literature describing imaginary, but not necessarily untrue, events and people. In the second sense we call something fiction, which is invented or imagined and not strictly true. In general, we can say that non-being and fiction are the antitheses of being. If I might to say so, the world of the non-being and the fictional are virtual. In this short chapter therefore I would like to concentrate on the nature of the virtual world(s) and to see in what sense man can be open to the virtual world.

Our first question is: what kind of and how many virtual worlds there are? In my understanding the term virtual world has a wider meaning. I call virtual not only the world of the Internet and three-dimensional technologies, but all phenomena, which are not real and have limited or no access at all to the real world. In this sense, for example, an advertisement on television also can be considered as a virtual world, since it gives us to believe that we will be as young and beautiful as the lady in the advertisement. The “world” of this advertisement

is also a virtual world, because it imposes us a non-existent “reality”. Virtual worlds share the common trait of pretending to be real, though they aren’t.

There are various types of virtual worlds. For example our own fantasy and memory or a painting, a poem or an erroneous philosophical reflection to the world can also be considered as virtual worlds. There are, however, “innocent” virtual worlds, which try to maintain the connection with the real world. The difference between a fictitious story and the virtual world of the media is that the latter has no connections with the higher sphere of truth, whereas an artistically valuable artifact can have an authentic relation to the truth. The 4000 year old heroic poem of Gilgames beautifully unfolds the essence of friendship through the friendship of Gilgames and Enkidu. Through a particular friendship we can see the eternal and the real idea of friendship, notwithstanding that the Gilgames-epos is also a fictitious story. In contrast to this, the virtual world, for example, of a soap-opera has no relation to anywhere. The fictitious world of soap-operas of the media or the valueless writings is not open to anywhere; it closes man into its narrow world. Nevertheless, man cannot live in the limited or pseudo world of soap-operas for longer period, because this world doesn’t reach the level of intensity of the “actual” virtual existence. Classical literary works can urge us to leave and ameliorate our environment and our own world. The fictitious world of the literary works of lesser value doesn’t encourage us to leave its limits, but, because of its shallowness, doesn’t enchain man either. On the other hand, the virtual reality of the media doesn’t let man enter his own field, that of reality. We have to distinguish therefore the virtual world of modern technology from the fictitious artworks of art and fiction, and we have to define the virtual world, which is in fact closed.

The virtual world of the media made possible by modern technologies is a radically new phenomenon. This phenomenon is a virtual world *par excellence*. It demands the degree of appearance to such an extent that man believes himself to exist and act in a real world,

although in reality man encounters only virtually real objects. This type of virtual world has reached such a degree of imitation that it (virtually) can take over the role of God. This new world of the media imitates God, like a new deity who creates the world and maintains it in its pseudo being. This world tries to imitate God's every manifestation, by which it becomes a fake horizon of life. This world is virtual for the reason that it does not point to any higher reality beyond itself. The inhabitant of such a world is deprived of all his transcendence and cannot realize that his transcendence should point to a real horizon. Such a person – in the “prison” of his virtual world – will never perceive that his transcendence is ordained to the self-revealing God and not to contingent and in most of the cases non-existent realities.

As a matter of fact the main distinction between the real world and the virtual world is that the real world has real existence, whereas the virtual world has no real existence. The real reality is in actual existence by reason of *actus essendi*. Now, the question is how can one live and what is man open to in a world which possesses no *actus essendi*? The question is of highest importance, since it concerns man's ethical being in the world. The human being is, however, ordained to truth;²⁵⁹ man is searching for the truth. Similarly, in ethical sphere too, man is leveled to the real good and to the real bad, and man has to be connected with real persons. There is no point, however, to speak about real moral life without the condition of reality. As Saint Thomas Aquinas says: the good presupposes the true.²⁶⁰ Without real good and real bad there are no oughts and there are no morally bad acts. If man is ordained to a real world (and I think he is), then he is ordained to truth as well. The real truth in itself however cannot be virtual; the virtual world therefore can be considered as a negation of truth, a categorical no to the real world and its values. This negation however has ethical consequences for man. A man living in virtual “reality” can seriously do harm his own self-identity. In such a situation he cannot find his place in the world, and cannot value his

²⁵⁹ As Saint Augustine said: *Quid magis desiderat anima quam veritatem.*

²⁶⁰ „Bonum presupponit verum.” *De Veritate* 21,3.

connections. Finally, he loses all connection with the real world and lives in a false horizon. The false valuation of the world and self-identity results in a distorted idea of man. Man can, for example, confuse the two worlds and can transpose his addictions (sexual addictions, violence learnt from video games and movies) from the virtual world to the real world. In this case, for example, man abuses the dignity of the other person and considers him not a person but an object. In cases like this the perpetrator's as well as the victim's human dignity is injured. Living in a virtual world deprives man from his freedom, since he cannot do otherwise as the virtual world dictates. Man living in a virtual world believes he has freedom, although he has limited freedom. Acts of such a person are also limited. Now, the act, losing its transcendence, cannot give an appropriate response to real values, the good and the bad. The loss of freedom and transcendence is, however, the strictest slavery. In short, we can say that since the virtual world is closed in the strictest sense of the word, man's openness loses its dynamism and results in a closed and perverted system, which is unable to reflect the real world and any transcendent, God-directed intention.

Now, the world of the media, of course, does not exist in reality in its ideal form as we have described it above. It was only an analysis of one virtual world from the many. Besides the fantasy world of literature and the virtual world of the media as it is visualized by modern technologies, there are other fictitious worlds such as the world of totalitarian regimes. Totalitarian regimes also tried to compress man's freedom and create a virtual world. From a philosophical point of view we can say that the two most drastic dictatorships of the 20th century also had aspired to shape the world and man according to their conception. Communism and Nazism, from a philosophical point of view, had tried to achieve destruction of reality and total negation of the world. Nevertheless, they failed, since neither Communism nor Nazism was able to enter the person's most intimate sphere. There always had remained a small room for real freedom in family, or in interpersonal relations, in friendships, or at least

in the free and sober thinking of the individual. In this sense, these totalitarianisms were not as perfect as the dictatorship of the (post-)modern phenomenon of the media could be.

Freedom is a peculiar human character, which distinguishes us from animals. The crucial point of human existence is the use of freedom. The inner order of freedom reflects its practice in perfect form, which is possible only in truth. Thus freedom has to incorporate truth and has to dwell within the positive framework of truth. From this it follows that freedom without truth is not freedom or is a pseudo form of freedom. The human being can develop himself in accordance with his dignity only in freedom. Communism and Nazism sought to deprive man of his transcendent desire to truth, by which man could possess his identity. Dictatorships had created “their truth” replacing transcendental truth. This, however, means to negate the real dignity of the person. In this sense we can say that totalitarian regimes are based indeed on relativism.²⁶¹ In the framework of relativism, dictatorship can deprive man from that which essentially belongs to him: freedom and truth.

From what we have said so far it is evident that all virtual worlds, the worlds of non-being and fiction are closed worlds. It means that, on the one hand, they do not reflect any higher sphere of the reality; on the other hand, they reduce man’s openness to a particular, limited sphere. Man, however, cannot live in a limited and, in the final analysis, destructive world. In this sense the proprium of man cannot be characterized by being open to the world of non-being and fiction.

²⁶¹ On relativism in totalitarianisms see the publications of the International Academy of Philosophy: Alexander Solschenizyn, *Macht und Moral zu Ende des Zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts*, hrsg. v. Rocco Buttiglione und Josef Seifert, Internationale Akademie für Philosophie im Fürstentum Liechtenstein, Akademie-Reden (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter, 1994), and Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Memoiren und Aufsätze gegen den Nationalsozialismus 1933-1938*. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Zeitgeschichte, mit Alice von Hildebrand und Rudolf Ebner hrsg. v. Ernst Wenisch (Mainz: Matthias Grünewald Verlag, 1994); Josef Seifert, (Hg.), *Dietrich von Hildebrands Kampf gegen den Nationalsozialismus* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Carl Winter, 1998); Rocco Buttiglione, *Augusto del Noce. Biografia di un pensiero* (Casale Monferrato: Piemme, 1991)

3.9. The limited “World” of Surroundings of Animals

“Man is the being who can say ‘No,’
the ‘ascetic of life,’ the protestant par excellence,
against mere reality.”
(Max Scheler, *Man’s Place in Nature*)

In this chapter with the characterization of the limited world of surrounding of animals we would like to get closer to the proper understanding of the world of man, and eventually to the phenomenon of world-openness. The limited world of surrounding of animals is one among the many “worlds” that we investigate in the course of the analysis of the objects of man’s world-openness. In this chapter we would like to know whether the world of surroundings can be considered as real and ultimate objects of man’s world-openness or not. In this chapter we are interested in the nature of the world of surroundings of animals in respect of the question whether it can satisfy man’s world-openness. In other words, we would like to know whether man can be defined solely by the world of surroundings or man is open to something else than the world of surroundings.

It was Max Scheler who applied the distinction between man’s world (*Welt*) and the surroundings (*Umwelt*) of animals for the very first time in philosophical context.²⁶² In this chapter I will follow mainly Max Scheler’s train of thought, but I will add some criticisms. Scheler adopted the world-surroundings distinction to express the fundamental difference between man and animals. According to Eugene Kelly, there are four main theses in Scheler’s “*Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos*”,²⁶³ which constitute the framework of the distinction and which are inseparable from its proper interpretation. Scheler’s first thesis: the living body and the Psyche are a unity, and ascended together in a four-step evolutionary process. The second: (human) spirit is a non-emergent and autonomous phenomenon that stands in

²⁶² Insights of Jakob von Uexküll might have influenced him. Von Uexküll published a book in 1909 with the title “*Umwelt und Innenwelt der Tiere*”. In this book he introduced the term *Umwelt* to denote the subjective world of organisms. In a certain sense von Uexküll was more precise since he distinguished also *Umgebung* from *Umwelt*, and within *Umwelt* other different kinds of worlds such as *Wirkwelt*, *Merkwelt*, *Tastwelt*.

²⁶³ It has two standard translations in English: Max Scheler, *Man’s Place in Nature*. (translated by Hans Meyerhoff) New York: The Noonday Press, 1971. and Max Scheler, *The Human Place in the Cosmos*. (translated by Manfred S. Frings) Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2009.

opposition to impulsion. The third thesis says that spirit pertains to the very foundation of the universe and the fourth that the role of the human being in the cosmos is the infusion of life with spirit.²⁶⁴ Scheler's characterization of the spirit centers on the distinction of world and surroundings.²⁶⁵ The distinction applied in the Western philosophy between spirit, reason and understanding is sometimes presupposed in philosophical texts. According to Scheler, the traditional usages of the word "spirit" have devastatingly been confusing. In contrast to the traditional usage, therefore, Scheler proposes a new one with the implication of characterization of the spirit as being "impotent" and "powerless".

The main point of Scheler's *Man's Place in Nature* is to tell us that the human spirit's capacity of experiencing all entities or things as objects implies that, ontologically, the human place cannot be found in space, time and the cosmos, but must be "nowhere" yet relative to whatever is "somewhere" as objectified by spirit. The expression of "outside" (*gegenüber*) the cosmos does not have the meaning of a scientific distance between man and the cosmos, because distance, too, is an object for humans. Man is, says Scheler, "world-open" and this again would imply that man is not tantamount to "being-in-the-world" as Heidegger said, but is a being outside the world because of his endless objectifications.

Now the surroundings of animals, and as a matter of fact every kind of world, which differs from the human being's world, gets thematized around the theme of spirit (and person), which is, according to Scheler, "ultimately an attribute of Being itself which becomes manifest in man, in the unity of self-concentration characteristic of the person."²⁶⁶ The essential characteristic of the spiritual being is that it is absolutely free from the bondage of life, from its addiction to everything that constitutes life. The human being is especially free

²⁶⁴ See Eugene Kelly, *Introduction*. In: Max Scheler, *The Human Place in the Cosmos*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2009. pp. XI-XVII.

²⁶⁵ See Max Scheler, *Man's Place in Nature*. New York: The Noonday Press, 1971. 36. ff.

²⁶⁶ Max Scheler, *op. cit.* 56.

from instincts, “including its own drive-motivated intelligence”.²⁶⁷ In short, freedom, more properly speaking, the totality of freedom determines his life and not surroundings-dependent instincts nor surroundings themselves.

Only that being, which objectifies the world, can live in a world-open manner. Man is free from his surroundings; the world of man therefore can be characterized as a possible object of objectivization. Man’s world is open to various types of interactions with other men. Even if there are pre-programmed behavioral patterns in this world, they do not determine his whole existence: it is a real interaction; man can form the world as well as freely subject himself to the world. In this sense not only is man open to the world, but also the world to man. To be the possible object of objectivization means that in the world of man there are no hidden or impassable parts for spirit (this is the meaning of the frequently quoted Aristotelian dictum *anima est quodamodo omnia*, that is, each individual soul is to some extent all things). On the other hand, in the case of the animal world there is no freedom and interaction, since every action and reaction, even in an animal that is highly developed, such as a chimpanzee, is the result of instincts, drives and sensory perceptions. Since everything is pre-set in the animal environmental world there are no sudden, unexpected events, to which animals should give an answer in a totally different life-structure. As a matter of fact, even if an animal lands in an unexpected situation, it will never perceive that it is a completely new situation and will never decide itself to accommodate to the new circumstances. This is because of lack of objectivity: animals cannot observe themselves and the situation from outside. Of course, animals will give an “answer” to the new situation, but this answer reflects the previous closed instinct-world of the animal and has no real connection with the new situation. An animal will never recognize the qualitative otherness of the changed surroundings, since instincts preset everything according to one type of world. Scheler says:

²⁶⁷ Max Scheler, *op.cit.* 37.

The structure of the environment is precisely adapted to the psychological peculiarities of the animal, and indirectly to its morphological characters as well, and to its instincts and sensory structure, which form a strictly functional unity. Animals only notice and grasp those things which fall into the secure boundaries of their environmental structure.²⁶⁸

Owing to his openness, man can act against his instincts. On the other hand, animal behavior is incapable of performing acts against instincts. The world of animals is a system of questions and their answers, in which each question has only one proper answer. Animal cannot go against their instincts giving a counter-answer. Even if some animal seems to have freedom and seemingly can give unexpected answers, it is because there are other, for us invisible or hidden, but for the animal manifest, pre-packed instinctive answers. In my view, one has to severely separate real human freedom from the animal naturalistic behavior, where there are no traces of freedom in any sense of the word. By the same token, I think one has to reject attributing emotions, rational considerations and similar phenomena to animals. I think that if we do not reject from the beginning all of these conceptions, we would go too far, as far as the animalization of the human being. If we accept, for example, that animals can feel generosity we also have to accept that animals have souls, heart and will. That animals have some sort of a soul, had been a common view prior to Descartes. According to this pre-Descartian view, animals have soul (or something similar), but certainly a soul that is not a rational personal soul and thus is decisively different from a human soul. From the 20th century regrettably there are numerous thinkers, who claim that animals should have the same (human) rights as humans. The common point of their error is the insufficient distinction between human freedom and animal instinct-patterned behavior. Sometimes Scheler also seems to suggest that there is only a quantitative difference between human and animal behavior.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁸ Max Scheler, *op.cit.* 38.

²⁶⁹ "We find in animals the capacity for generosity, help, reconciliation, friendship and similar phenomena." Max Scheler *op.cit.* 34.

In the limited world of the surroundings of animals we can talk about openness only in a limited sense. Man is open, that is, he can show evidence of behavior which is open to the objects of the world. Moreover, the scope and spectrum of his behavior is unlimited. Animals – as Scheler says – have no “objects”.²⁷⁰ It means that animals, and other non-spiritual beings cannot objectify, cannot transform their world into an object. The animal world is therefore limited in comparison to the human world, since animals cannot open up the limits of their surroundings to other possible worlds or surroundings. On the other hand, it means that in the animal world there are no acts of detachment and distance which would signify that the animal transforms a “surroundings” into the “world”. In the animal world, therefore, there is no possibility of reflection, that is, rational reconsideration, to the ontological situation of the animal.

Another deficiency can be found in the surroundings of animals. Man is not only able to reflect on the rational reconsideration of acts, but he is able to reflect on that it is he who is performing the act of reflection. This is what we call self-consciousness. Animals, as experiments show, might have other kind of consciousnesses, such as body-consciousness, when for example a mammal can make a distinction between itself and its young. This consciousness is based on a very primitive form of identification; it is not a developed and conscious knowledge of the self. From this follows that when surroundings motivate (by effecting the instincts) an animal, it does not even experience the drive as its own. Similarly, in the limited world of surroundings of animals, there is no reflection on hearing and seeing, nor in the subject of hearing and seeing; there is no reflection on movement, nor on the subject of the movement, etc.

A further characteristic of the world of surroundings of the animals is that in a world like this there are no categories of thing and substance. The reason for this is that in animals

²⁷⁰ See Max Scheler *op.cit.* 39.

spiritual qualities are missing. It means that animals lack the unitive faculty, which would relate the experiences of different senses and would form a spiritual “picture” of the object seen from another aspect. Scheler illustrates it with a very good example:

Even the highest animals do not have a fully developed thing-category. The ape that is handed a half-peeled banana will again run away from it, whereas he will eat it if it is completely peeled, and he will peel and eat it if it is not peeled at all.²⁷¹

The animal world also lacks the so-called points of reference. An animal does not wait for an experience, since it is closed to a world, in which everything works according to predetermined happenings. In this sense the human world is an empty world, where man has infinite possibilities to develop his activities and to gain new experiences, which he has never encountered before. Man is open to the world, which means that man can really have experience. The world of animals, because of its closedness and lacking of points of references, precludes the possibility of growth and increment in knowledge, spiritual and mental experiences, etc.

In simple surroundings there is no possibility of behaving “intelligently”. Behaving intelligently means to be open to new situation, and to be not determined fully by previous events. Now, in the animal world there is no possibility to secede from the environment, in this sense there is no possibility to transcend it. Animals will always remain in their surrounding and will never have real world space.²⁷² Animals in their surroundings will never go beyond themselves and transform everything into an object of knowledge. A surrounding in contrast to the world is limited. Since there are only schemes in surroundings, there is nothing that could be an object of transformation. Surroundings therefore are not enough to the unlimitedly world-open being. Even if when man is in his surroundings, he immediately transforms it into a world. The main reason why we have to reject the idea that surroundings would be the object of man’s openness is because of man’s ontological structure: the house

²⁷¹ Max Scheler *op.cit.* 43.

²⁷² See Max Scheler *op.cit.* 46.

that man dwells in cannot be the “world” of surroundings. Man who lives an active, free, responsive life and – as Scheler remarked – can say “no” to the happenings of life ontologically is incapable of living only in the frameworks of surroundings.

Now, the question is whether we can give any kind of religious interpretation to the “world” of surroundings? According to Scheler, one has to see also the religious significance and not only just the basic phenomenon of world-openness. In other words, he tried to grasp also the object of openness asking what we can and what we have to be open to. In short, he answered the question of what human openness is open to. He says that man’s essence is defined in contrast to issues of being involved and concerned with the world: in short, concerning his essence, man has nothing to do with the world; his essence is extrinsic to the world. In this sense the limited world of surroundings is also just one step in the realization of the extrinsic essence of man. This realization is originally religious and is gratified in religion.

It seems therefore that surrounding in itself has no religious significance. It can have, however, if we relate it to a more comprehensive world, which can in fact be open, in other words, which can guarantee access to higher reality for man. This other, more comprehensive world is as open to divine reality as man is open to the world. This thought, however, is not tantamount to Scheler’s idea of the God-creator man.²⁷³ All I wanted to say with this is that, since human being has a world-transcendent structure, – if he is concerned with surroundings – he immediately forms surroundings into a world and at the same time – owing again to his ontological structure – transcends this world as well.

We can conclude that since man is “against mere reality” and the “protestant *par excellence*”, he can say “no” to the limited world of surroundings in his world-transcending position. We can fully agree with Scheler that the limited world of surroundings of animals is a closed world. It means that, on the one hand, it does not reflect any higher sphere of the

²⁷³ See the last pages of *Man’s Place in Nature*.

reality; on the other hand, reduces man's openness to a particular, limited sphere. In this sense the proprium of man cannot be characterized by being open to the world of surroundings of animals.

3.10. The World as Being

“Man is but a reed, the most feeble
thing in nature, but he is a thinking reed”
(Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*)

As we have seen in the previous chapter Scheler characterizes man as the protestant par excellence, who can say no to the totality. Let's continue the train of thought of the previous chapters by asking whether man can say “no” to the world as being too. Besides this metaphoric understanding we are especially interested how can philosophical anthropology characterize man: as a being open to being as such or as a being not open being? Well, the answer at first sight seems to depend on how we define being. To provide a characterization for being is one of the most difficult tasks of philosophy if not impossible. It seems that we cannot start our investigation with a definition since any definition would presuppose being and thus become circular. Many philosophers, such as Aristotle claim that we can unfold the nature of being, distinguish its different moments and kinds, but there is no definition for being.

As a matter of fact, we are in trouble with being, since if we say – with Gehlen and Scheler – that man is in an eccentric position, then we would like to know whether man can be extrinsic to being as well. Approaching the subject matter from a different angle, however, we can say that the fact of man's eccentric position already includes that man can say “no”, but at the same time man can say “yes” to the world as being. This peculiar characteristic is due to man's fundamental openness to being.

If we say that the question of being is in substantial connection with the question of God, that is, being is transparent to God, we would think that those who hold man's openness to being, at the same time claim man's openness to God. Heidegger, on the other hand for example, holds that man is able to know being, and says that man is not the cause of himself, but strictly rejects any common point or strong connection of common being and God as well as any hierarchy between them. The thesis of this chapter is formulated in contrast to the

views which say that one can understand human being without metaphysical problematization. I claim that without an ultimate metaphysical-philosophical problematization and answer and without a turning to being one cannot give a meaningful explanation to the question of what man is and cannot explain the proper object of man's world-openness.

Some thinkers of the German classical philosophical anthropology do not proclaim themselves atheists, but consider marginally the problem of God. Plessner and Gehlen, for example, hold that "before theology" – that is, in a scientific framework – one cannot tell whether divine reality is man's projection or not. According to them, the task of philosophical anthropology is to show peculiar human traces based on the comparison of man and animals. They claim that in the course of the evolution of species man "became open to the world" and as "second nature" started to build culture. Man, freed from instincts, creates an artificial, secondary world, that is, culture. The precondition of culture is the "overflow of instincts", more precisely, the overflow of motivations. According to Gehlen, culture and social order compensate man's "organic backwardness" (*organisch mittellose*) and provide help in the life-struggles of man.²⁷⁴ Although Gehlen stresses that there is qualitative and not only quantitative difference between man and animals, he cannot explain – neither his fellows – the origin and nature of man's spirit (*Geist*) nor its essential attributes. In Gehlen the pure word, "overflow of motivations", cannot give sufficient explanation to concerns of man like habits, tradition, art, world-view, openness, experience, etc. The central aim of a good philosophical anthropology should be to give an answer to the question why man needs concerns like these. In my view, the answer is that man is spirit with openness to the totality of being; this answer, however, is unacceptable and annoying for philosophical anthropologies of today influenced by physicalism and evolution theory. We can say therefore

²⁷⁴ See Arnold Gehlen, *Der Mensch: seine Natur und seine Stellung in der Welt*. Athenäum: Frankfurt am Main, 1966. p. 499; p. 504; p. 687.

that the non-speculative, that is, purely physicalist anthropology (of Gehlen, Plessner, Freud, or Marxist thinkers such as Gramsci, Lukács, etc.,) is entirely agnostic and atheist.

Another example from Plessner can well illustrate the weak point of this reductionist anthropology. Plessner holds that, as a by-product of evolution, man is a theoretical being. Man's capacity for (intellectual) reflection results in an outstanding situation. Plessner calls it "eccentric position". I think that, although eccentricity provides a fairly good description of man's place in nature, without postulation of spirit and being (as the proper object of spirit) Plessner's term has not so much sense. As a matter of fact Gehlen, Plessner and Freud also cannot give answer to man's spirituality. Consequently, they cannot give answer to being either.

They tried to define the human spirit functionally, i.e. in terms of the visible "functions" of the spirit. After such a functionalistic explanation of spirit they certainly will be interested only in the functional definition of religion and being. According to Gehlen, for example, religion has its origin in totemism.²⁷⁵ He says that after its inception religion proved to be "useful", people therefore institutionalized it as they did with every secondary expedience. Gehlen as well as Plessner hold that belief has a function of a higher governing principle. Now, I think that in this naturalistic context man's all self-transcending strivings and intentions become historical and socially conditioned. The functional-historical explanation of man rejects the idea of the common human nature and advocates relativism in everywhere: in hominisation, culture and religion. According to Plessner, we don't know whether the universe is intelligible, this can be answered only theologically. "In our profane life we have come to terms with pluralism, world and multiplicity [...] in which man is developed as an organic being among the many."²⁷⁶

²⁷⁵ Arnold Gehlen *op.cit.* 468. ff.

²⁷⁶ Helmut Plessner, *Conditio humana*. Pfullingen: Neske, 1964: 25.

Anthropological systems like this reject metaphysics and the metaphysical investigation of human being. Nevertheless, I think that one cannot grasp fully man with the method of rationalistic positivism. The rejection of metaphysics leads to serious consequences. The anthropology which excludes the notions of being and spirit and God's reality is not only methodically, but essentially atheist, or it is not anthropology at all. If we compare it to our scheme above, interpretations like this are on the first level of explanation. They cannot give answer to the most important attribute of human being, to the phenomenon of his spirit. They can describe man in many situations and can depict him, for example, from the viewpoint of evolution (which is of course extremely useful and contributes to the paleontological, scientific debates on man), but they cannot problematize the real reason, origin and aim of man's inherent dynamism. Now, in order to meet these requirements we have to turn to metaphysics. Without metaphysics and metaphysical explanation human existence falls into absurdity.

In contrast to this, on the basis of a real philosophical anthropology we can and we have to determine theses, which are based on strict necessity. These like "man is spirit", "man is open to being and God in an unlimited extent", "man is free" are very modest insights. On the other hand, however, these insights open up enormous perspectives. I claim therefore that reality cannot be grasped fully in its totality without exceeding the instrumentalistic and relativistic explanations. Metaphysical answers, that is, answers, which suppose that there is a common being and this being can be known and isn't stuck on the first level of inquiry, provide a more comprehensive explanation of man. Historical-relativistic approaches cannot give any answer to the question of man and being. Hence we have to turn to being in order to answer the question of man.

We can ask the question, what is man open to when he is open to being? First of all, man is open to his fellow-beings. His openness makes possible to enter communication with

other human beings. When man is open to being, it means that he is open to the productions of human mind. He is open to language, culture, art, science and countless other specifically human activities. In the very same act of openness to being man is open also to himself. It means that with this capacity man can overcome his fears, indiscipline, can face new situations and ideas. Of course, in being open to being man can be open to many bad and evil matters. It is however not the original disposition what makes openness bad or evil. Nevertheless, if man “uses” his openness for bad things, he can close himself into a limited, exitless world. In its final analysis, being open to being means that man is open to God. In short, we can say that in all these acts of openness man realizes himself and step by step approximates to his ultimate goal.

The world of being is, however, not the ultimate object of his openness. It’s true, we implicitly know being in every cognition of individuals. The world of being, however, is the horizon in which the real final goal can appear and, as a matter of fact, appears in all instances of cognition. Man’s dynamism towards the infinite unfolds itself through the different objects of being. Being on the other hand is also an object of man’s openness. Man in order to come to a self-knowledge turns to the material and spiritual things of the world and implicitly grasps being too. In this context “knowing implicitly” means that there is no special cognitive or volitional act, or special organ or faculty which would be assigned to grasp the world of being as object. Man implicitly knows about being in all explicit knowledge.

3.11. The World as Cosmos and God

“interior intimo meo et superior summo meo”
(Augustine, *Confessions*, III, VI)

The central insight of the previous chapter was that without a metaphysical-philosophical problematization one cannot answer the question of the proper place of man. We would expect that in this chapter we will speak about God as a more comprehensive meaning-providing reality presupposing a certain gradation between different “types” of worlds. Our question here is, however, somewhat different. We would like to know how we can speak about man’s openness to God intelligently in the language of philosophy.

In this chapter we will investigate whether the world as cosmos and God can be considered as a real and ultimate object of the phenomenon what we called man’s world-openness. In short, we would like to know whether man can be defined solely by the world as cosmos and God, or man is open to something else. Here we wish to study whether the world as cosmos and God can do justice to the *proprium* of man, to what distinguishes him as a person.

First of all, we have to make it clear that God and cosmos are different. We do not identify cosmos with divine reality. It’s true, however, that they both seem to be comprehensive objects. At least they are more comprehensive than, for example, the object-world. The world of cosmos, although it refers to an immense expansion, is still something that is incomplete in itself. Under the term cosmos we usually understand some temporally and spatially extended physical entity which encompasses also spiritual realities. Even if we use expressions like “universe” as totality of things or “world” as a comprehensive term for everything visible and invisible around us, we usually refer to something that belongs to our world, that is, which is only the extension of our world. In this sense if we say that man is open to the cosmos, we cannot really define what openness is. To say that man is open to God means far more than the simple expansion of the world around us.

No doubt, the main idea of the modern anthropology, man's openness to the world, comes from the religious thinking. It is very interesting that in the ancient Mid-Eastern languages a word standing for the "world" did not exist! In the Biblical description of the creation we read that God created man after his likeness and let him to "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth".²⁷⁷ In one word, man has dominion over the earth, the world - but for the expression of the idea of the world the Hebrew has no word. The biblical as well as other Mid-East creation-myths like the Babylonian *Enuma Elis*, however, can clearly express that man as God's servant stands above all creatures. Even the sun and moon and the stars had been created for him. Man is first of all committed to God and not to the world. Man's relation to the world therefore receives a different meaning. Man is no longer (and as a matter of fact he has never been, since it is an ontological endowment) the subject of the world. The deep theological (and philosophical) message of the majority of the creation-myths is twofold. Firstly, it clearly states God's transcendence. Secondly, it demythologizes the world and it subjects it to man, in other words, it "delivers the world into his hands".

We have characterized man as a being who has an inner metaphysical capacity to challenge everything that faces him. Scheler called this attitude world-openness.²⁷⁸ According to Gehlen, man's openness to the world is a principal feature of man and this is what makes us human beings; this differentiates us from animals.²⁷⁹ It seems that Scheler like Gehlen defines man with the world. Scheler's principal aim was to define man in contrast to the world. Concerning this point we can fully agree. Now, how can we understand that man is open to the world?

²⁷⁷ Gen 1,26

²⁷⁸ Max Scheler, *Man's Place in Nature*. New York: The Noonday Press, 1971: 37.

²⁷⁹ Arnold Gehlen, *Der Mensch: seine Natur und seine Stellung in der Welt*. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1966: 37.

A possible way to answer this question would be to define the object of openness. In this sense, if we say that the proper understanding of man's openness to the world is God-openness (which is our thesis and as a matter of fact the answer to the question), then all we have to do is to tell what the object of our world-openness is. On the other hand, if we say that this "object" or final aim is God, we cannot give a definition of God as we did in the previous chapters concerning different types of worlds. If we want to know the proper direction of man's openness then we cannot follow the method of our previous descriptions and characterizations. The "world" of God is not like the object-world, which visibly differs from other forms of the world and is therefore easily definable. The "world" of God is not like the world of language, which has distinct limits, audible and visible manifestations. There is only one way to proceed: we have to tell what God means for man. Our questions are: what is and what the divine milieu means for man? Here the term "milieu" will be thematized in contrast to any other worlds.

The animal world comprises all what an animal needs in order to maintain its existence. Animal necessities of life are in correlation with their specific surroundings. In case surroundings change, that is, conditions change, animals can no longer maintain their existence. Animals are in a sense open to their surroundings. On the other hand, the fact that human beings are open in all their acts and manifestations shows that there must be something other and more comprehensive object for their aspirations than just the extension of their surroundings (surroundings-world). This is the "world" what we call "divine milieu". The divine milieu for man is the condition of man's world-openness. Without this condition we are unable to define the proper meaning of our world-openness.

There can be observed in man an aspiration for searching for truth and reasonableness, which reveals that man is ordained to God and not to other finite goods and worlds. In this sense God as "world", that is, the divine milieu means final reasonableness for man.

Reasonableness means that man's infinite yearning, striving, questioning, and acting must have a reason, which gives full justification for all these acts. This conclusion – which echoes what Saint Augustine said in his *Confessions* and what is the motto of this chapter – says that though in a certain sense we don't know who and what God is, we know that He is in our inmost soul and He is the one where we want to arrive at.

In short, we can say that being oriented and open to God is the condition of man's world-openness. Its negation would mean a misunderstanding of man's world-openness. In this sense, man is not ordained to the world, and not ordained to language, etc., but is open and ordained to God. Insofar as we can see signs and ciphers of God in man's acts and existence, we can understand properly his main character. It also means that man is indeed cultural, historical, etc...etc., being, but cannot be understood only culturally or historically. Man, however, surpasses culture as well as history. Similarly all other definitions fail if they do not hold man's primary transcendental character. On the other hand, it also means that this is the only way to understand the essence of culture as well as of history and all other phenomena that we tried to apply to man in the previous chapters.

Now, what does God mean as world for man? God means for man what surroundings mean for animals. In other words, animals live in their surroundings, man live in the divine milieu. In this sense, man living in the divine milieu is at his place: this is his home.

Conclusion

The understanding of man's world-openness

The study of philosophy does not aim at knowing
what people thought but what the truth of things is.
(Thomas Aquinas, *De Caelo at Mundo*, I,22,9)

In the conclusion of my thesis I try to summarize what I mean by man's openness to the world and God. In this thesis we pursued anthropology: we wanted to give an answer to the problems of man's nature and vocation from the viewpoint of his openness to the world. It is clear, however, that the "world" taken in the sense of common usage cannot give a satisfactory answer to these questions. The same conclusion was presumed by the Greek as well. Plato dedicates a whole dialogue to the "inexhaustible desire for knowledge" and "Eros", which can be defined as the longing for wholeness, a "daimon" whose aim is to reach wisdom without ever owning her and is used to describe fulfillment between human being and Gods. By the help of Eros one can ascend step by step to the beauty and the good, which fulfills man's all desires (Symposium 210-212). In other words, Eros is a means of ascent to contemplation of the Divine. In spite of this observation of the Greeks, however, it was our modern history which contested and raised the question of man in a radically new way, and said that there is no question concerning man which wouldn't raise further series of questions. In my view it was the modern (19th century) anthropology that first realized man's exceptional place in the world.

In the footsteps of Max Scheler we have said that man's peculiar characteristic is his greater independence from his surroundings. Unlike animals man has a world and not only surroundings. The term "world-openness" is the synonym of this independence or freedom. But what the peculiar meaning of this expression is? Basically this is the main question of my thesis. Practically speaking what is man open to? It seems that man is open to new things and

experiences. Other beings, however, experience only a few, species-dependent stimuli. We have discussed the difference between man and animals in many parts of this thesis; but since we have arrived to the crucial part of our work we have to raise the question again: does man's world (*Welt*) differ from the surroundings (*Umwelt*) of animals? And if yes, in what sense do they differ? Is man just simply "tuned" to his world as animals are to their surroundings? Or is there a deeper meaning of his world-openness? If this is not the case, that is, there is not a deeper meaning of his world-openness, then there is only a quantitative difference between the relation of man and the world, and the connection of animals and their surroundings. The wording, however, can mislead us. It might suggest that the world of man is no more than a very sophisticated surroundings. According to the ancient thought, the *kosmos* is the house of man, who lives his life within its walls. This *kosmos*-world had clear borders and those who tempted to cross these borders were pronounced to be foolish – as for example Dante chanted about Ulysses, the sailor. I think, however, that those who think that the "world" is a closed dwelling-place cannot understand the real, substantive difference between man and animals. In this thesis I tried to show that the difference is not only quantitative, that is, man is not only less dependent from his surroundings than animals. No. Yet again, the problematization can mislead us, since we don't want to say that man is open only to the world and receptive only to the world. On the contrary, we wanted to claim and underline (in all analyses and conclusions of the thesis) man's unconditional openness; in other words, the definition of man (that is, the understanding his world-openness) is his constant indefiniteness. I mean by this that man essentially transcends all aspects of his life: he is wide-open to further experiences and new tasks coming from new experiences, and finite beings can never satisfy his aspirations, aims, desires, etc. Man does not look up to the world, because he ascends above the world and is above all images what he has ever developed and will develop about the world. Man's openness is the precondition of the

possibility to question the entirety of the world. Without this openness man cannot thematize the world as world in his experience. If there is not the restless inner aspiration or the continuing search for the knowledge of objective truth – let's call it again Eros – in man to transcend every finite being, then there is no search and inquiry about the world either. This is the first conclusion of the thesis.

With this, however, we did not answer the question of the nature of man's world-openness. Where does this unusual character and attitude of man come from? Where does this unappeasable restlessness spring from? Shall we refer to the culture – as Gehlen, Portmann, Rothacker and Marx suggested? According to them, we find man's definition in culture (they suggest many definitions for culture, which I discuss in the thesis). In my view, however, man's relation to the culture over again raises further questions, since man cannot find his rest in his productions either. It is our common experience (and the main presupposition of the thesis) that finite beings cannot satisfy man: man is dissatisfied with his world, as well as with his artificially developed worlds, such as culture. The more man produces, the more he wants to produce, simply because of the reason that man is able to create more and more worlds beyond his actual cultural world. The constant development of the culture also shows that man's original vocation and defining properties (that is, his essence) are beyond culture. Moreover, man raises above all his possible worlds, since man exerts more – intellectual, effectual, volitional, etc. – power what the aim of the world in question requires. As a matter of fact man's experience of his contingency was supposed in every train of thought of the thesis.

It was one of the main concerns of the thesis to list and analyze different worlds. In this thesis I analyzed from the point of view of man's openness the cultural world, the world of language, the object world, the natural world, the social world, etc. My main question was

whether these worlds can satisfy man's all-transcending openness or not. Or, in other words, my question was whether these worlds are the proper objects of man's openness.

Animals, in order to maintain their existence, stand in need of something else; they are dependent on food, definite whether conditions, definite physical conditions, etc. Animal necessities of life are in correlation with their specific surroundings. In comparison to this observation man's aspirations are continuous and interminable. Animals stand in need of only their surroundings; man always stands – as our experience of contingency shows – in need of something infinite. Man has no particular aim, which would fulfill his strivings. As a matter of fact there are in man biologically non-understandable factors as well, such as when one risks one's life in order to find new inventions, new "worlds". In this sense – says Gehlen²⁸⁰ – there is no difference between the Polynesians who sailed the Pacific and the first aero plane pilots. They all risked their life for something, that is as a matter of fact biologically and evolutionary contra-productive. Yet, this kind of attitude is the very origin of the human life. A comprehensive theory of man, therefore, has to answer the question of this biologically paradox phenomenon as well. We called this phenomenon world-openness. We, however, wanted to define the proper understanding of this "world", since – as our experience has shown – it cannot be "just" the world around us, the more sophisticated surroundings.

Man as God-directed being

The principal question of the thesis concerns the nature of man's world-openness. In order to answer this question we analyzed different worlds that can be the object of man's world-openness. In this respect we analyzed the world of language opposing our investigations mainly to Heidegger. We analyzed the world (surroundings) of animals basing our investigations mainly on Scheler and Gehlen. We applied in the third main part (part 3) of

²⁸⁰ Arnold Gehlen, *Der Mensch: seine Natur und seine Stellung in der Welt*. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1966: 64.

the thesis many similar distinctions. Now, the common conclusion of all of these investigations is that it seems that man is in need of certain conditions of life as well as something (and this is his real “world”) infinite that, however, recedes and remains intangible. We concluded that the only answer to man’s constant lack and strivings is that there exists a world-transcending vis-à-vis. This was that point of the thesis when we finally discovered the proper understanding of man’s openness. If we say that God is the ultimate object of man’s openness we do not do anything, but we give a reasonable answer to our absolutely world-transcending desires, volitional acts, demands, questions, questionings, aspirations, etc. It was one of the main concerns of the thesis to introduce different aspects, in which man can be open (chapter 2.3.). In this sense I analyzed the openness of the intellect, the openness of the will, the openness of other faculties of man. In each case the main question concerned the true meaning and proper object of these opennesses. If we say that the world for man is God then we affirm that it is not the man who creates the object of his desires as for example Feuerbach thought. There is no other explanation for man’s continuous yearning for the reality of the vis-à-vis but the assumption that this (that is the real existence of the vis-à-vis) is precisely what lays the foundation of the yearning.

In the course of the conceptual groping for the boundaries of man’s world and saying that its proper understanding is found in a reality that we call God, however, we are not in any sense identifying the world with God. In my view pantheism cannot give a good answer to the question of man and his openness and God, and completely misunderstands man’s openness. If we still want to use the word “world” and, accepting Scheler’s distinction between man’s world and animal surroundings, we still want to know what the world means for man, with the expression “world as God” we mean that the phenomenon of the world in respect to man’s openness has its real understanding in the divine milieu. The world which we see, which we experience, which we try to unfold, which we love and hate is always more and other than

what can be seen, experienced, loved and hated. (This is basically the conclusion of the third part of the thesis, in which I differentiate between different types of “worlds” that can be the object of man openness.) The more we see and experience in this world, the less we seem to possess, since there are always more and more horizons opening up before us. The more we see and experience, the more we are open to, therefore the closer we are to God. The conclusion of the analyses (chapters 3.1.-3.12.) of the different worlds to which man can be open was that these worlds cannot provide a full interpretation of the phenomenon of man’s world-openness and they all point to a higher reality.

The divine milieu for man is the condition of man’s world-openness. The fact that we are open in our all acts and manifestations (as the analysis of different aspects in man [chapters 2.3.] and the analysis of different worlds show in the thesis) reveals that there must be something higher than just the world, and all its manifestations; “a being than which nothing greater can be conceived.” Without this condition we are unable to define the proper meaning of our world-openness. Heidegger, for example, had been struggling throughout his life with the problem of man’s infinite horizon. He couldn’t tell whether it is the nothingness of being or the existence of beings, or God. He intuited that there supposed to be something that makes reasonable all of man’s strivings. Practically speaking Heidegger was not an optimistic thinker: he could not believe that there is real justification of man’s openness, and, as a result, he substituted it with the “nothingness of nothingness”. Now, in contrast to Heidegger, we must ask whether it is not our continuous search for God that shows that we are unconditionally ordained to Him. I claim, precisely it is.

Also the biological theory of man presupposes the existence of the vis-à-vis, whom we are ordained to (chapters 2.7. and 3.4.). Without this condition it is impossible to define the exact meaning of world-openness. In this sense God as world, that is, the divine milieu means reasonableness for man. Reasonableness means that man’s infinite yearning, striving,

questioning, and acting must have a reason, which gives full justification for all these. This justification is supposed to be not only a leitmotiv or principal idea or object of the phenomenon, but that which is in the closest relation with man, constituting his innermost (*interior intimo meo*) part, which is inseparable from him.

The divine reality had many forms and names throughout the history of religions. It is the task of a religious scholar to list all these names. Here we cannot discern whether religions were right in their various concepts of God. Nevertheless, I think, that a possible justification of religions depends on their understanding of the openness of man's existence: whether they negate, or see it in a relativist way, or hold it acknowledging man's openness as well as God's transcendence.

We can recapitulate our main insights in the following points. These points can be considered as the main conclusions of the thesis:

1. World-openness is a many-faceted term: it entails a structural metaphysical essential trait of man as a finite person, which has no proper opposite except the absence of it in animals and in other non-personal beings. Every human person is characterized by this structural world-openness regardless of his acts and attitudes. World-openness can also mean something that requires human intellectual and volitional or affective conscious acts and culminates in the *attitude* of world-openness, an attitude which is free and which not every human person possesses but which is opposed to many forms of closedness. We contrasted man's world-openness to other opennesses and to various objects of the same openness. We came to the conclusion that man's world-openness' final understanding is man's God-openness. The corollary of the main thesis is that God-openness is the real condition of man's world-openness. Its negation would mean a misunderstanding of man's world-

openness. Its negation means that the world would be the object of man's vocation, despite the fact that questions of man transcend his all experiences gained in the world. Man is ordained to the world-transcendent vis-à-vis reality. We understand properly the distinguished feature (*differentia specifica*) of our existence insofar as we understand it in respect of the problem of God. Our transcendental vocation is, therefore the precondition of our world-openness.

2. The constitutive ontological world-openness that exists in each human person potentially, even in the retarded or unborn, but in the awakened human person actually, has again many parts. These refer on the one hand to the structural intellectual (and logical-linguistic), volitional and affective sphere of the human person: intellectually it means that the human person can form a concept of the physical spatio-temporal cosmos as a whole that infinitely transcends the narrow sphere of his immediate environment and allows him to have a world-concept; it also entails the capacity of being open to the being (*Sein*) or the intellect's openness to all beings, an openness that, as we have seen, goes beyond world-openness, because it is an intellectual openness to all beings and also to all spiritual and human beings which we only know in a tiny part but of whom we can think and to whom we can be related to in love and in various forms of solidarity, for whom we can pray, etc. Intellectual, volitional and affective world-openness also entails the capacity to have concern to respond to value-bearing goods for their own sake, to give them a due response. It thus also entails a vocation of the human person to reach solidarity in many senses with all other human

persons.²⁸¹ It also includes an openness to the cultural, social, linguistic, scientific, and religious world.

3. But this structural ontological, intellectual and moral capacity and vocation is not yet the attitude of world-openness that is an element of fundamental intellectual and volitional and moral virtues and attitudes that entail world-openness in an entirely new sense such as love of truth, humility, reverence, love, etc. opposed to various forms of closedness and close-mindedness through lack of love of truth, irreverence, egotism, pride, etc. We surveyed many forms of closedness throughout this thesis contrasting to forms of openness.
4. God-openness is the final understanding and real condition of man's world-openness. Its negation would lead to a misunderstanding and misinterpretation of man's world-openness. Its negation means that the (cultural, linguistic, and many other forms of limited) world would be the object of man's vocation, despite the fact that questions, search of truth, hopes and desires of man and most of all his vocation transcend all his experiences gained in the world and the whole world of finite beings.
5. We cannot understand the essence of man's openness as long as we find it only in culture, language, etc. Man's language, social world, culture, etc., cannot be understood only on biological grounds. Similarly all other definitions will fail if they do not hold man's primary transcendental and indefinite character. This also means that that is the only way to understand the essence of culture as well as history and all other phenomena that we tried to apply as possible

²⁸¹ See Josef Seifert, Max Scheler's 'Principle of Moral and Religious Solidarity', *Communio*, XXIV/1 (Spring, 1997), pp. 110-127.

definitions to man in this thesis. In this sense, man is not ordained to the world, and not ordained to language, etc., but is open and ordained to God. Thus our transcendent vocation to God-openness is the precondition of our world-openness.

6. From what we have seen, thus far, it is evident that God-openness is a most fundamental trait of the human person that is in no way just of functional importance to enable us to reach real world-openness.
7. Man is not in the first place a being characterized by world-openness but a being ordained to the world-transcendent absolute being and the supreme and living reality that is the true spiritual vis-à-vis of man and is infinitely more than and different from the world. This no doubt it is what Augustine means when he says “*Fecisti nos ad Te, Domine, et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in Te.*” We understand properly the distinctive feature (*differentia specifica*) of our nature and existence insofar as we understand it in respect to the comprehensive dependence of the world on God and the ordination towards God that includes our radical causal dependence on God not only at the beginning of our existence but at any moment in the *concursus divinus*. Likewise includes many other forms of relation of man on God besides this radical causal one: on the knowledge of God as source of our supreme happiness, on divine pardon and mercy in the face of our sins and, as the religious person thinks, on divine redemption, but likewise as supreme final cause and more than that: as supreme object of love and worship. The openness that lies, for example, in the religious act as adequation of our will and heart and intellect to God “for its own sake”, because it is *dignum et iustum*, is a God-openness and God-directedness that

is in no conceivable way just part of world-openness or reducible to enable us more adequate world-openness, while it remains true that only if we reach this God-openness of which we spoke do we also have a proper world-openness and even a recognition of the concept of the world in its finitude and contingency and are able to overcome a superstitious idolization of the world and world-openness. God means for man what surroundings mean for other creatures. In this sense, God Himself for His own sake is “man’s world”. Animals depend on their surroundings and are related to them, man lives in a “divine milieu”. Human beings depend not only on their surroundings, not only on human culture and on language or art, and the human being is not only incomparably dependent on God but called to know and to love God for his own sake. In this sense we see: world-openness is not the highest thing or vocation of the human person but God-openness which is completely different. And this absolute openness to being, this God-openness and call to full metaphysical, moral and religious openness is not only important as a means to reach full world-openness but, on the contrary, the experience of the world and all forms and attitudes of world-openness have as their supreme task that of leading us beyond the world to God. Therefore we can retitile our work from the original “world-openness” to “openness”, and openness that entails the openness to all being of which Aristotle spoke and which is the backbone of metaphysics, and that culminates in God-openness.

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